

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN





ABOUT THE AUTHOR

W. Ray Loomis was born in Shawneetown, Illinois. When an Ohio River flood struck the town, drowning some forty of its residents, and wiping out the Loomis bookstore, the family moved to Evansville, Indiana.

The new environment early drew Mr. Loomis into journalism and politics, and he became a reporter for the *Press* and the *Courier*. Later, after serving as secretary to Congressman Charles Lieb of Indiana, he became assistant superintendent of the House of Representatives' Document Room, in Washington, and he also founded and edited the *Monthly Compendium of Congress*.

Leaving Washington in 1922, Mr. Loomis returned to the newspaper field, working for many years for the East St. Louis (Illinois) *Journal* (as managing editor), and for the St. Louis (Missouri) *Globe-Democrat* (copy editor, makeup editor, night editor).

When the Associated Press wrote the story of Mr. Loomis' collection of "Firsts," they speculated that his son might be the first American soldier to reach Berlin. Instead, Lieutenant Bill Loomis, a lead bombardier in the "Jolly Rogers" group, was credited, reports his father, with being the first American to cause the destruction of a Japanese brewery outside of Hirohito's homeland! (In Formosa)

The author now lives in Collinsville, Illinois.

FIGHTING FIRSTS



By

W. RAY LOOMIS



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FOREWORD

When the tentacles of warfare reach out and drag a nation into unavoidable conflict three considerations transcend all else in importance.

These three are: *men*, *munitions*, and *money*—collectively known as the “sinews of war.”

Underlying these essentials prevails the spirit to survive and the will to win. There is need for unfaltering teamwork, but in the final analysis, individual effort is the foundation upon which rests hope for victory.

With these thoughts in mind, *Fighting Firsts* was inspired by a desire to place particular emphasis on the personal roles of outstanding contenders in World War II, to perpetuate the glory that attended their accomplishments.

Something never before attempted in a step-by-step recounting of war events, is the goal of the narrator—the listing of all available names of those men and women who were “firsts” in their line of military effort.

Often “firsts” are of tremendous importance.

Recording them, along with the *names* of the combatants, serves to link the *personal* and *physical* aspects of warfare. They add to the authenticity of the occasions.

One occurrence may be singled out as an illustration: When the 40th (National Guard) Division experienced its “baptism of fire” at the front, a Reuters dispatch reported that one Sergeant Ducat had fired the 40th’s FIRST shot in combat since World War II.

Ducat’s comment was: “*It seemed as if half the brass in that part of the world was watching me.*”

All of which proves that brass can get excited over anything “first.”

In other words, "firsts" can be regarded unequivocally as of historic moment.

It has been said of George Washington that he was the first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen. His "firsts" memorialized his greatest attributes. So it should be in the case of heroes of the 20th century's "reverberating forties." Their "firsts" are also symbolic of service for our republic.

The opinion is offered that history cannot afford to bypass the names and accomplishments of these war immortals. They carved niches for themselves in the great events covering almost five tragic years.

The ensuing pages have been written in order to identify the hundreds of American World War II heroes in Europe, as well as to tell of their valiant exploits.

Living or dead, they deserve that break.

It is important to be reminded: "They came, they saw, and they conquered."

W. R. L.

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----------|
| CHAPTER 1—First United States Drive Against Axis | 7 |
| Enter Eisenhower | 8 |
| Armistice Adventure | 9 |
| Raff Resists Rommel | 10 |
| Heroes Honored | 11 |
| Memorable Meeting | 12 |
| Joyous Jeeps | 13 |
| Tenacious Tigers | 13 |
| Enemy Enmeshed | 14 |
| French Friendship | 14 |
| Tremendous Triggerman | 15 |
| Aircraft Artistry | 15 |
| Welton Wizardry | 16 |
| Boxcar Birds | 17 |
| Luftwaffe Liquidation | 17 |
| Tokyo to Tunisia | 18 |
| Jackson Jolts Jinx | 18 |
| Flying Fortress Firsts | 19 |
| Hush-Hush Hero | 19 |
| Casablanca Chesterfield | 20 |
| Militant Medicos | 20 |
| Beachhead Belligerent | 21 |
| Engagements Everywhere | 21 |
| Plentiful Petticoats | 22 |
| Negro Napoleon | 22 |
| Libyan Legion | 23 |
| Roosevelt Reconnaissance | 23 |
| El Hamma Havoc | 24 |
| "Show Me" State Showman | 25 |
| Miami Mix-up | 26 |
| Egyptian Entree | 27 |
| Royal Reception | 27 |
| Equils' Escape | 28 |

| | |
|---|---------------|
| CHAPTER 2—First Mediterranean Offensive | 29 |
| Lampedusa Liquidation | 30 |
| Amphibious Artistry | 31 |
| Winged Warriors | 31 |
| Cerny Circus | 32 |
| Sky Train to Sicily | 33 |
| Redoubtable Ranger | 33 |
| Complete Control | 34 |
| Sicilian Sentimentality | 34 |
| Paratrooper Pioneer | 35 |
| Wholesale Warfare | 35 |
| Terrorized Troina | 36 |
| Randazzo Rupture | 37 |
| Mediterranean Misadventure | 37 |
| Decorated Dog | 37 |
| Lucky Landings | 38 |
| House—Hale—Hall | 38 |
| Lloyd's Lady | 39 |
| No Sissy Over Sicily | 39 |
| Enemy Exit | 40 |
| Neptune Nonplussed | 40 |
| Jostling Jumping Jacks | 41 |
| Cloak-and-Dagger Deliverer | 41 |
| Destroyer's Destruction | 42 |
| CHAPTER 3—First United States Campaign in Europe | 43 |
| Death Dealing Draftee | 44 |
| Obstacles Overcome | 45 |
| Battle Begins | 46 |
| "T"—That's Texas | 46 |
| Salerno Superman | 47 |
| Audacious Admiral | 47 |
| Hurry-up Hospital | 48 |
| Air Assaults | 48 |
| Rome Raid | 49 |
| Introductions in Italy | 50 |
| Hot Hiding Place | 51 |
| Biscuit Bombing | 51 |
| Gipsy Goliath | 51 |
| Killer Kelly | 52 |
| Sea Saga | 53 |

| | |
|--|--------|
| Aquatic Ambulance | 54 |
| Cornucopian Celebration | 54 |
| Naples Notations | 55 |
| Hawaiian Heroes | 55 |
| Volturmo Victory | 56 |
| Tough Towns | 56 |
| Anzio Amphibious Assault | 57 |
| Pugilistic Pacesetting | 58 |
| Fabulous Footsy | 58 |
| Belligerent Bazookaman | 59 |
| Anzio Air Activities | 60 |
| Ace Against Axis | 61 |
| Beachhead Bombings | 61 |
| Siege, Stalemate | 62 |
| Cassino Catastrophe | 63 |
| Nocturnal Nimbleness | 64 |
| Ship-Sinking Specialist | 64 |
| Hopping Handymen | 65 |
| Spring Stampede | 65 |
| Hot Heels | 66 |
| Beachhead Breakthrough | 66 |
| Jubilant Junction | 67 |
| Highway of Horror | 67 |
| Valmontone Vistory | 68 |
| Momentous Meeting | 68 |
| Supreme Sacrifice | 69 |
| Rome Restitution | 69 |
| Frenzied Flight | 70 |
| Livorno Liberation | 71 |
| Pisa Penetration | 71 |
| Dazzling Doughboy | 72 |
| Mountain Mop-up | 73 |
| Futile Fortifications | 73 |
| Apennines Achievement | 74 |
| Enterprising Enterprisian | 75 |
| Wounded Women—WACS—War Weddings | 75 |
| CHAPTER 4—First Clash With Axis: in Atlantic | 76 |
| Nazi Nemesis | 78 |
| Champion CVE Card | 79 |
| Submarine Seizure | 79 |

| | |
|--|---------|
| Landslide Lunge | 80 |
| Rockets Remove Raider | 81 |
| Atlantic Ambushers | 81 |
| Submarine Swan Song | 82 |
| Greenland Guardianship | 83 |
| Enemy Expelled | 84 |
| Arctic Air Adventures | 85 |
| Iceland Incumbency | 85 |
| Airacobran Animosity | 86 |
| Ascension Airway | 86 |
| Transport Terminals | 87 |
| Convoy Casualties | 88 |
| CHAPTER 5—First Contact With Europe's Frontiers | 89 |
| Pulverization Program | 90 |
| Bombings Begin | 91 |
| Flying Fortress | 91 |
| Transcendent Thunderbolts | 92 |
| Murderous Mustangs | 93 |
| Pilotless Plane: Buzz Bomb | 93 |
| Snowball Sky Service | 95 |
| Lurking Liberators | 96 |
| London Luminaries | 96 |
| Eastern European Enbroilment | 97 |
| Inferno Impedimenta | 98 |
| Supreme Sacrifice | 99 |
| Epochal Evacuation | 99 |
| Romanian Resurgence | 100 |
| Athens Attacks | 101 |
| Lane Lands Leaders | 101 |
| Balkan Bomber | 102 |
| Russian Reciprocity | 102 |
| Soviet Skies | 103 |
| CHAPTER 6—First Invasion of Western Europe | 104 |
| Air Force Artistry | 105 |
| Campaign Casualties | 105 |
| Pacesetting Paratroopers | 106 |
| Carrier Champions | 107 |
| H-Hour Hades | 108 |
| West Wall Walloping | 108 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Bull's-Eye Battleship | 109 |
| Spearhead Specialist | 110 |
| Deadly Destroyers | 110 |
| Efficient Elsie | 111 |
| Amphibious Aggression | 112 |
| Aerial Ascendancy | 113 |
| God-Sent Grasshoppers | 114 |
| Airway Aislemen | 115 |
| D-Day Deviltry | 116 |
| Western-Front Wizardry | 116 |
| Eisenhower Extravaganza | 117 |
| Spectacular Spearheader | 118 |
| Corps Commander | 119 |
| Lost Leader | 119 |
| Colleville Capture | 120 |
| Battle Between Blitz Buggies | 120 |
| Artillery Artistry | 121 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| CHAPTER 7—First United States Ground Combat on the | |
| European Continent | 122 |
| Skirmishing Sharpshooters | 123 |
| A-1 Airmen | 123 |
| Dieppe Departure | 124 |
| Noted Navigator | 125 |
| Marauder Mastery | 126 |
| Flying Fortresses | 127 |
| Pilotless Planes | 128 |
| Photographic Panorama | 129 |
| Beachhead Bridled | 130 |
| Hedgerow Hoppers | 131 |
| Cherbourg Captured | 131 |
| Port Pre-Emption | 132 |
| Hurricane Handicap | 133 |
| Temporary Truce | 134 |
| Vire Victory | 135 |
| Major Move | 135 |
| Fragile Front | 136 |
| Germans Give Ground | 137 |
| Capital Captured | 138 |
| Breakout Blasting | 139 |
| Nazis Nullified | 140 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Jerry Jackpot | 141 |
| CHAPTER 8—First Double-Header Invasion of the Continent | 142 |
| Enemy Encircled | 142 |
| Daring Doughboy | 143 |
| Breton Battles | 144 |
| Galloping GIs | 144 |
| Patton's Pursuit | 145 |
| Seine Steppingstone | 146 |
| Orleans Ordeal | 146 |
| Paris Pandemonium | 147 |
| Wehrmacht Windup | 148 |
| August Advances | 148 |
| Airfield Acquisitions | 149 |
| Fourth Front | 150 |
| Navy Narrative | 151 |
| Commando Charge | 152 |
| Bridge Blasters | 153 |
| Morning Maelstrom | 153 |
| Thunderbird Teamwork | 154 |
| Butler Brigadiers | 155 |
| O'Daniel Overhauls Opponents | 155 |
| Martyr Maxwell | 156 |
| Bell's Beer Barrel | 157 |
| Armies Amalgamate | 158 |
| September Surrender | 159 |
| Brest Battle | 160 |
| Liberty Lane | 162 |
| Aumetz Acquired | 163 |
| Thionville Totters | 163 |
| Inundation—Isolation | 164 |
| Squeeze Starts | 164 |
| Tank Trouble Terminated | 165 |
| Metz Mastered | 166 |
| Torrid Thrust | 167 |
| Rhine River Reached | 168 |
| French Finale | 169 |
| CHAPTER 9—First Plunge out of France | 171 |
| Spearheading Snyder | 172 |
| Hard-boiled Harmon | 172 |

| | |
|--|---------|
| Country Crossings | 173 |
| Midnight Madness | 174 |
| Holland Hubbub | 174 |
| Maastricht Malice | 175 |
| Paratroop Participation | 176 |
| Sky Service | 177 |
| Taylor's Triumphs | 177 |
| Nijmegen Narrative | 179 |
| Campaign Conclusion | 180 |
| Luxembourg Liberated | 181 |
| Artillery Attack | 182 |
| Reich Reached | 182 |
| Rose Reduces Rotgen | 184 |
| Siegfried Spearheaders | 184 |
| Westwall Warfare | 185 |
| Aachen Attack | 186 |
| Squeezing Strategy | 187 |
| Significant Surrender | 187 |
| Roer Rumbblings | 188 |
| Hamich Heroism | 190 |
| Colorful Colonel | 190 |
| European Extravaganza | 191 |
| Saar Struggle | 192 |
| December Drama | 193 |
| Pugnacious Policeman | 194 |
| Haffner's H-Hour | 195 |
| CHAPTER 10—First Great American Setback in Europe | 196 |
| Skytroopers' Stands | 197 |
| Fighting Footballer | 198 |
| Cota Contenders | 199 |
| Monschau Masterpiece | 199 |
| Patton's Push | 201 |
| Risky Relief | 202 |
| Bastogne Boomerang | 203 |
| Silent Spearhead | 204 |
| Foe's Final Failure | 205 |
| Rapid Railsplitters | 206 |
| Triple Triumph | 208 |
| Luxembourg Luster | 209 |
| Bud's Beat-ups | 210 |

| | |
|---|---------|
| Grow's Guardians | 212 |
| Winter Wizardry | 213 |
| Armies' Amalgamation | 214 |
| Enemy Exit | 215 |
| CHAPTER 11—First Weeks in Enemy Homeland | 217 |
| Ardennes Aftermath | 218 |
| Patton Prelude | 218 |
| Snowdrift Sluggers | 219 |
| Houston Hero | 221 |
| Colmar Conflict | 221 |
| Mighty Murphy | 222 |
| Vosges Victory | 223 |
| Roer Reservoir Roundup | 223 |
| Patton Preliminaries | 225 |
| West Wall Wedging | 225 |
| D-Day Drive | 226 |
| Artillery Ascendancy | 228 |
| Hodges' H-Hour | 229 |
| Patton's Participation | 230 |
| Trier Triumph | 231 |
| Historic Horseshoes | 232 |
| Ruhr Reached | 233 |
| Cities Captured | 234 |
| Rhine Reached | 235 |
| Simpson Stroke | 236 |
| Pocket Procedure | 237 |
| Cologne Captured | 238 |
| Royalty's Remains | 239 |
| CHAPTER 12—First Campaigning Beyond Rhine | 240 |
| Bridge Breakthrough | 241 |
| Costly Carelessness | 242 |
| Co-operative Chaplain | 243 |
| Airfield Activities | 244 |
| War Women | 245 |
| Bridgehead Broadened | 247 |
| Saarland Stormed | 248 |
| Back Yard Breakthrough | 249 |
| Coblenz Captured | 250 |
| Saarbrücken Seizure | 251 |

| | |
|---|---------|
| Record Rampage | 253 |
| Twin Thrusts | 254 |
| Final Fighting | 254 |
| Bridgehead Brilliancy | 255 |
| Flying Forces | 256 |
| European Extravaganza | 257 |
| Sterling Spearheaders | 258 |
| Spectacular Sky Show | 259 |
| March Mop-Up | 260 |
| Bridgehead Breakout | 261 |
| Frankfort Falls | 262 |
| CHAPTER 13—First Phase of Germany's Collapse | 264 |
| Octopus Operation | 265 |
| Double Dragnet | 266 |
| Norwegian Narrative | 267 |
| Invasion Incidents | 268 |
| Westphalian Warfare | 269 |
| Thuringian Tank Thrust | 271 |
| Muelhausen Masterpiece | 272 |
| Bavarian Battleground | 273 |
| Standout Soldiering | 274 |
| Treacherous Triangle | 275 |
| Pocket Precautions | 277 |
| Pied-Piper Proceedings | 278 |
| Pocket Penetrations | 279 |
| Fading Fuehrer | 280 |
| Shattered Schweinfurt | 281 |
| Five Fighting Forces | 282 |
| Elbe Epitome | 283 |
| Leipzig Liquidation | 284 |
| Ruhr Rout | 285 |
| CHAPTER 14—First Eastern Plunge out of Reich | 287 |
| Czechoslovakian Charge | 288 |
| Austrian Arrival | 289 |
| Flyers Freed | 289 |
| Triumphant Thunderbolts | 291 |
| Banner Buzz Boys | 292 |
| Fortress "Firsts" | 293 |
| Supreme Sacrifice | 294 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Berlin Bombings | 295 |
| Trenton Twins | 296 |
| Mercy Missions | 297 |
| Mustang Maulers | 298 |
| Traveling Ted | 299 |
| Supreme Sacrifice | 300 |
| Pilot Pioneers | 301 |
| Go-Getting General | 302 |
| CHAPTER 15—Last Warfare in Europe | 303 |
| Danube Danger | 304 |
| Key Killings | 305 |
| Austrian Accomplishments | 306 |
| Munich Mastered | 306 |
| Prize Prisoners | 307 |
| Reinhardt Receives Russians | 308 |
| Surrender Series | 309 |
| Dramatic Developments | 310 |
| Furious Finish | 311 |
| Final Firing | 312 |
| Enemy Eliminated | 313 |
| Berlin Brevities | 315 |
| Final Formalities | 316 |
| Index of Veterans | 319 |

CHAPTER 1

FIRST UNITED STATES DRIVE AGAINST AXIS

Hitler lit the fuse touching off a world holocaust on September 1, 1939.

In three years after Poland, his westward ramifications had engulfed nearly all of continental Europe. With the aid of Mussolini, his notorious partner in aggrandizement, a great segment of North Africa had also been brought under the virtual control of this man, portrayed by his critics as nothing less than a maniacal despot.

The Fuehrer now envisioned an attack on the east coast of North America. The jumping-off place for such a stupendous operation would have been North Africa.

This alarming possibility prompted feverish plans by the United States and Britain to beat the enemy to the draw. The showdown came in early November of 1942, three months after Americans began their grueling offensive against the Japanese in the Solomons.

Great hordes of Allied air transports landed eager paratroopers on the Dark Continent. Supplementary invasion units (several Army divisions) and supplies arrived almost simultaneously, having been brought to the coast of French Africa by the greatest naval armada in history up to that time, consisting of 850 ships.

It marked the beginning of Hitler's protracted defense of the Fortress of Europe.

The complete rout of the Axis hinged on these monumental objectives:

- (1) Establishing a second major front. (Germany at this time was desperately at grips with Russia, whose re-

juvenated troops were in the process of pushing Hitler's invading forces out of their country.)

(2) Driving the enemy from North Africa, including the area of conflict west of the Nile River;

(3) Destruction of the Nazis' great air forces and shipping facilities in the Mediterranean;

(4) Seizure of the foe's Mediterranean islands and, finally, invasion of the European continent.

A month prior to the start of the American campaign, the British 8th Army had rallied and accomplished a breakthrough from El Alamein after more than two years of stalemate fighting to save Egypt and the Suez Canal from enemy capture. With United States help now at hand, Marshal Rommel's Afrika Korps faced the possibility of being "squeezed" between Allied forces driving from both the east and west.

ENTER EISENHOWER

Led by General (then Lieutenant General) Dwight D. EISENHOWER, of Abilene, Kansas, the FIRST American offensive against Hitler's Armies started clicking on November 8, 1942, in French North Africa. More than 140,000 United States troops were landed on ten beaches around Algiers and Oran, in Algeria, and Rabat and Casablanca, in Morocco. Scores of ships from the British and American fleets participated.

President Roosevelt announced the drive was designed "to deny to the aggressor nations a starting point from which to launch an attack against the Atlantic Coast of the Americas. In addition it provides an effective second-front assistance to our heroic Allies in Russia."

Eisenhower informed the French: "We come as friends and not as enemies."

Only token resistance was encountered at some points, while in other coastal sectors there was a bitter contest with the French.

General Giraud had been fully informed of Allied plans only a few hours before our forces landed. Admiral Darlan, supreme commander of the French Army and Navy, reluctantly agreed to co-operate with the invaders, although known as a Nazi collaborationist. He kept his promise despite the angry dissent of Marshal Petain.

The quarreling French leaders, including de Gaulle, an Allied sympathizer, made peace among themselves on the 13th, five days after the invasion began.

Meantime the fighting at Casablanca was the worst until Darlan signed an armistice on the 10th. Oran was immediately won over. Resistance to General Patton's forces at Casablanca ceased on the 11th.

The French Army marched into Tunisia on the 15th to protect the right flank of the Allies, who were about to be embroiled with the Nazis and Italians moving westward.

The great battles of the campaign were fought in Tunisia, where the Allied forces met and defeated the German and Italian troops invading from the east. Tunis and Bizerte fell on May 7, 1943. All Axis armed resistance ceased at 8:15 p.m., on May 12, six months and four days after the campaign was inaugurated.

Sergeant Marvin H. ANDERSON, of South Minneapolis, Minnesota, was the FIRST American soldier to enter Algiers.

Lieutenant Colonel A. H. ROSENFELD, of Mt. Holly, New Jersey, led the FIRST troops to land.

Boatswain's Mate Russell DORN, of University City, Missouri, was in charge of the FIRST boatload of soldiers to arrive at Casablanca.

Corporal Bernard J. KESSEL, of New York City, commanded the FIRST American tank to enter Oran.

ARMISTICE ADVENTURE

Riding in an Army conveyance in total darkness through sixteen miles of enemy-occupied country, Brigadier General William H. WILBUR, of Palmer, Massachusetts and Highland Park, Illinois, completed one of the most dramatic mis-

sions in the African campaign. He landed at Fedala with the leading assault waves after preparing his plan for contacting the French in Casablanca and securing an armistice. The sole aim was to prevent unnecessary bloodshed.

On his dangerous journey Wilbur was intermittently subjected to heavy bursts of fire. He got through safely. Returning toward his command, he detected a hostile battery firing effectively on American troops, took charge of a platoon of tanks, personally led them in an attack, and captured the battery.

This officer, who later commanded the 36th Infantry Division in Italy, was the FIRST general to win the Congressional Medal of Honor as a result of the fighting in Africa.

The soldier who drove Wilbur along the "road of Hell" won the praise of President Roosevelt when he was summoned into the presence of the chief executive at Casablanca, in January, 1943. He was Sergeant Sanford FORBES, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the FIRST enlisted man to win the Distinguished Service Cross in Africa.

RAFF RESISTS ROMMEL

"Umbrella troops" were sensational in their accomplishments from the very beginning of the North African campaign. Eventually known as the "third flank" of the infantry, these paratroopers were the best trained for grueling warfare of any ground fighters when the Americans went into action against the Axis for the first time.

The 509th Paratroop Battalion, under Colonel Edson D. RAFF, of New York City, was the FIRST unit of its kind to tackle the enemy on the Dark Continent. The "Raff Force" staged a 1500-mile flight from Land's End, England, the longest in airborne history, to Talfaroua, Morocco, on D-day, then made the FIRST tactical jump at Youks les Bains, an airfield northwest of Tebessa, Algeria, one week later, on November 15.

It was the FIRST American unit to fight against the

Germans with the French. The Raffs were also the FIRST troops to reach Gafsa, after being the FIRST Americans to enter Tunisia. They captured Gafsa, but because of their small number retired, later recapturing the town with the aid of reinforcements. The Raffs were also the FIRST to contact Marshal Rommel's Afrika Korps. On December 3, the battalion captured Faid Pass and turned the place over to the French to hold.

In the campaign in Germany, in 1945, Raff commanded a regiment which delivered the deciding blow in the capture of Muenster, and later led the FIRST troops into Essen.

The FIRST plane of a squadron of 42 paratroop carriers which signaled the invasion of North Africa was piloted by Captain Donald E. BRADLEY, of Sacramento, California. Running out of gas, the unarmed aircraft was forced to land. The soldiers and crew were imprisoned at Oran by the French. They were liberated when that city was captured by the Allies on D-day plus one.

HEROES HONORED

Lieutenant Gerry H. KISTERS, of Bloomington and Vincennes, Indiana, was a double-barreled hero in the matter of awards for bravery and A-1 performance on the battlefields of two continents. He was the FIRST soldier to win both the Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross.

In Tunisia he singlehandedly wiped out a Nazi artillery crew while on patrol duty. Near Gagliano, Sicily, while still a sergeant on cavalry reconnaissance, he became separated from his group after he had aided in capturing an enemy machine-gun crew. Out in No-Man's Land, Kisters discovered there were snipers to the right of him and snipers to the left of him and another Jerry machine gun in front of him.

The Indiana fighter was shot in the leg before he really went into action. When he was through, the Nazis lost all their crew but one by death. The lone survivor was last seen

running away. Suffering from eight wounds, Kisters managed to crawl to cover before the enemy snipers could avenge the loss of their comrades.

The Purple Heart is traditionally an Army award although members of other service arms occasionally receive the citation. Chief Boatswain's Mate Lloyd M. MORRIS, of Vallejo, California, was the FIRST Coast Guardsman in history to receive the medal. The presentation was made in recognition of his bravery when strafed by enemy machine-gun fire from Axis planes while landing with a ship's beach party at Fedala, Morocco, on November 8.

MEMORABLE MEETING

Out in the desert wastes, and while still 42 miles from Gabes, a historic meeting of the armies of two Allied nations was effected on April 7, 1943—Americans who had fought their way east for 140 miles and Britishers who had advanced a longer distance of 1,500 miles. The self-appointed greeter on that occasion was Sergeant Joseph A. RANDALL, of State Center, Iowa. He was the FIRST United States soldier to make formal contact with the English force. The Axis was driven out of Africa one month later.

The distinction of being the leader of the FIRST unit of troops to form the junction with the 8th Army went to Lieutenant Colonel Charles J. HOY, of Washington, D. C. This outfit, of which Randall was a member, took more than 1,000 Axis prisoners over a period of six weeks and brought about the capture of Mateur, on May 3. Hoy's men smashed thirteen miles from the south through bursting shells and deadly minefields to reach their objective, making it possible for the American divisional troops to seize this key Tunisian city.

An infantry force led by this colonel in Germany captured 300 Nazis in an exceptional performance, near Puffendorf, November 18, 1944.

JOYOUS JEEPS

The jeep was a novice in warfare when the doughboys started rolling in Africa. An upstart in locomotion, it soon became indispensable, even being the vehicle at times for the attainment of events of historical significance.

Once the inhabitants of a freed town were so jubilant they blanketed a jeep with flowers. It had been driven into Sfax, Tunisia, by Corporal (then Private) William S. HODGES, of Merced, California, the FIRST United States soldier to enter the enemy naval base. The Jerries had abandoned the place before the Americans rattled in and encountered the rejoicing populace.

Another jeep driver, Sergeant Edward F. BERG, of Albany, New York, was the FIRST American to contact the British just before Gabes was captured.

The FIRST jeep to enter Bizerte when that seacoast city fell to the Allies was driven by Captain Richard L. DOWNING, of Norman, Oklahoma, a signal officer.

TENACIOUS TIGERS

Anti-tank operations were given a new twist in the Tunisian campaign. The soldier responsible in the initial tests was Major Edward L. AUSTIN, of Burlington, Vermont, son of a United States Senator. He was the FIRST officer to use anti-tank guns as artillery.

The M-10 Tiger destroyer, also known as the TD, was intended solely for wiping out enemy tanks. Major Austin began experimenting and, when there were no Nazi "blitz buggies" around, tried out his ideas in the game of artillery shooting. The practice was widely copied.

When Austin moved over to Italy and assumed command of a tank destroyer battalion, the weapons were often dug in directly behind the infantry and used in close support of the troops. The Nazis were caught in a square of terrific fire, with the regular artillery blasting from the beaches while the TDs were firing from both flanks.

Austin's force halted the German drive on the Anzio beachhead, February 16-17, 1944, destroying 25 of the foe's tanks and damaging others.

ENEMY ENMESHED

The British 8th Army wanted Gafsa for a base of supplies. The Americans were asked to capture it, and they did. The FIRST infantry battalion to enter the city was led by Lieutenant Colonel John H. MATTHEWS, of Staunton, Virginia.

Tunis and Bizerte were the cities which represented the "promised land" for the Allies, because when they were lost by the Germans there was nowhere else for the enemy to turn in Africa. Both key positions were captured on the same day—May 7.

Sergeant Werden F. LOVELL, of Malden, Massachusetts, was the FIRST American soldier to enter Tunis.

Sergeant Wayne C. MARTIN, of Vardaman, Mississippi, was the FIRST United States doughboy to go into Bizerte, making an unscheduled appearance at 3:20 P.M. The FIRST tanks arrived under the direction of Captain Worthing MUZZY, of Concord, New Hampshire.

FRENCH FRIENDSHIP

Co-operation of 50,000 or more French troops was necessary before Americans could be assured of the opportunity to wage a campaign in Tunisia. Without that aid, military experts believed there would have been prolonged fighting in Algeria—a costly operation. But General Giraud and the De Gaullists were helpful. They guarded the 1200-mile line of supply from Casablanca to the Tunisian front and furnished an added punch in battle action so sorely needed in the early stages of the campaign when the United States had only two divisions at the front.

Second in command in North Africa, Major General Everett S. HUGHES, of South Dakota, gave formal recog-

dition to this valuable aid of an ally at ceremonies in Algeria on September 6, 1943. He was the FIRST United States officer to decorate French Army enlisted men since World War I.

TREMENDOUS TRIGGERMAN

Sent to England in August, 1942, to help plan the North African invasion, Major General (then Brigadier General) Lauris NORSTAD, of Minneapolis, Minnesota and Charlottesville, Virginia, not only aided General Doolittle in organizing the 12th U. S. Army Air Force, but he was the FIRST air force officer of any rank to set foot on African soil when the great offensive started. He was present, under enemy shellfire, just after the seizure of the FIRST air base taken by the Allies in Algiers, having gone ashore with the assault forces on D-day. This and other fields were sending out planes against the Nazis before the day was over.

Norstad's principal job throughout the war against the Axis was to call the signals for virtually all American aircraft in Africa, and later in the Mediterranean. As operations officer, he carried out the orders of the air commander, being known as the "Allied airforce triggerman" also in the Pantellerian, Sicilian, and Italian campaigns.

The general worked independently of the ground forces. He often took over when the latter faced reversal, and socked the enemy so hard from the air that the tide of battle was turned. He became a general at the age of 36, was named Commander of the Order of the British Empire, and later shifted to Pacific service, being chief of staff of the 20th Airforce, whose Superforts raided Japan.

AIRCRAFT ARTISTRY

The FIRST Nazi airman to attack an American squadron in North Africa was shot down by the guns of Lieutenant William J. MOUNT, of Ossawatimie, Kansas. He was a P-40 Warhawk fighter pilot.

Captain Payton S. MATHIS, of Montgomery, Alabama, made a non-stop flight from Great Britain in piloting the FIRST Lightning plane into North Africa, and he completed 85 missions in six months, all in combat, in the Mediterranean theater before transferring his activities to the Pacific. There he became commander of the Falcon squadron of Lightning fighters, which shot down 162 Jap planes in the Solomons and the Rabaul, New Britain area, later taking over as skipper of the Vampire squadron, in March, 1944.

Commander of the FIRST group of Lightning fighter planes to operate in the European theater, Colonel Ralph S. GARMAN, of Whittier, California, landed his force from invasion barges near Oran, North Africa, on D-day, following the first mass movement of this type of aircraft to Iceland and Great Britain. The initial war action of these Lightnings involved escorting Allied bomber planes over Bizerte and Tunis, key targets for our air attacks during the development of the Tunisian campaign.

Captain John L. BRADLEY, of Shreveport, Louisiana, shot down two Nazi Junker planes within 30 seconds, the FIRST time this feat was accomplished. His victories were at Sened while flying a Warhawk. He became an ace in Tunisia, bagging six.

WELTON WIZARDRY

The FIRST bombing attack ever made by a Lightning fighter group was led by Lieutenant Colonel John W. WELTON, of Rowlesburg, Virginia. Collaborating with another officer, he developed a weapon making it possible to launch bombs. This was the beginning of fighter-bomber operations.

Welton's invention was used in the sinking and damaging of thirteen Axis supply ships and escort vessels in a period of two weeks in the African theater.

Captain Davis STENTZ, of Waynesville, North Carolina, teamed up with the colonel in bringing about this revolutionary development in air attack against surface targets.

BOXCAR BIRDS

FIRST man to land an American transport plane at many points in North Africa, Brigadier General (then Colonel) Thomas O. HARDIN, of Fort Worth and Dallas, Texas and Hartford, Connecticut, was one of the war's greatest experts on freighting material for the fighting forces. He was operations officer of the Africa-Middle East wing of the ATC, serving in the Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco combat areas.

Not long afterwards he was sending cargoes "over the hump" from India, having a leading role in developing the 600-mile serial supply route to China to the point where it was a worthy substitute for the Burma Road.

After this, Hardin ranged the Pacific. He had custody of the B-29s on their way to Guam from the United States, and maintained an unbroken sky-freight line for the Superforts. His first C-54 alighted on Okinawa one week after D-day to bring out a load of wounded. The general became commander of the Central Pacific wing of transport service.

LUFTWAFFE LIQUIDATION

The Axis lost almost its entire Mediterranean air force in an unavailing effort to retain its grip on North Africa. An American-British team, in conquering the enemy in the skies, made victory possible for the Allied ground forces. The United States "sparkplug" in this aerial blitz was Major General Laurence S. KUTER, of Rockford, Illinois and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who was the FIRST captain in the Army to be advanced to the rank of Brigadier General.

As deputy chief of the AAF staff, and senior American officer in planning the critical phase of the campaign, Kuter was given much credit for paving the way for the ultimate victory in Tunisia. His forces also inflicted losses which greatly weakened Germany's defense of her "Fortress of Europe."

Kuter became the youngest Major General in the Army at 38.

FIGHTING FIRSTS TOKYO TO TUNISIA

The FIRST group of Marauder planes to function in North Africa was commanded by Major David M. JONES, of Winters, Texas. This assignment followed his participation in the first raid on Tokyo. He piloted a Mitchell bomber in leading a flight of four planes in the Doolittle attack on the Jap capital.

Encountering a new foe in Tunisia, Jones obtained notable results in softening up Axis strongpoints just ahead of charging Allied ground forces. He led a particularly destructive raid on Sfax, on November 28, 1942.

The major was shot down over Bizerte. He was made a prisoner and spent 30 months in Nazi camps before his liberation near the end of the European war.

Another path of destruction laid by the AAF for the benefit of advancing ground troops was furnished on the way to the seaport city of Tunis. Outstanding in this harassment of the enemy was Colonel Frederick R. TERRELL, of South Pasadena, California and San Antonio, Texas. He was the leader of bombers in the FIRST British-American joint-action raid in which Royal Air Force bombardiers and gunners flew with Yankee crews. As a result of this teamwork, heavy bomb loads were dumped effectively upon the German armored division attacking our infantry east of El Gue-tar, in Tunisia, on March 23, 1943. The attacks from the air turned the scales against Rommel's tank forces.

JACKSON JOLTS JINX

"Old Hellcat" was a "jinx" plane until Captain G. H. JACKSON, of Grants Pass, Oregon, flew her home in Tunisia after being badly shot up. From then on she became the envy of other crews, winding up her career with a record as the FIRST medium bomber to complete fifty combat missions. The plane shot down nine aircraft, including three Nazi ME-109s, and sank a 12,000-ton merchant ship and three or four smaller craft. The Hellcat had been flying al-

most every day over Sicily when retired from active duty and was flown back to the United States for an exhibition tour. Captain Bryan M. LLOYD, of Dallas, Texas, succeeded Jackson as a pilot of this bomber.

FLYING FORTRESS FIRSTS

Flying Fortresses contributed their share to winning the war in the air over Africa, but they also had their troubles. There was a story back of the announcement that Captain Frederick W. DALLAS, of Houston, Texas, was the FIRST overseas casualty brought from the Dark Continent on a newly created American Airforce "ambulance" service for flying the wounded to the United States. A "rescue masterpiece" was attributed to Dallas after his plane crashed into a mountain near Bizerte. This pilot dashed into the burning craft and saved the lives of his crew, on January 19, 1943.

Sergeant Lee Wong GEM, of Chicago, Illinois, and a native of Denver, Colorado, gunner on another Fortress operating in Africa, was the FIRST Chinese-American in the war to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross. He shot down two German planes and damaged two others.

HUSH-HUSH HERO

The reason for the presentation of the FIRST British Military Cross to any flyer in the Royal Canadian Air Force was not divulged. From Ottawa came the announcement that operations performed by Flying Officer Harold F. MARTING, of Farmland, Indiana, earning him this outstanding recognition, were cloaked in military secrecy. The only hint offered was in a story released recounting the airman's thrilling adventures.

Marting's plane was shot down while attacking El Daaba airfield, in Africa, in October, 1942. Captured by Italians, he escaped from a prison camp in Greece and eventually reached Turkey after posing as a Gestapo agent. Otherwise little was revealed regarding his perilous journey taking up

nearly two months. A corporal in the United States Marines in the early '30's, Marting returned to civilian life before he joined the RCAF and was commissioned as a pilot in 1941.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. CONDON, of Larchmont, New York, was the FIRST combat intelligence officer in the AAF to be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. His citation was for notable results obtained in aerial engagements in North Africa and the Middle East. Condon received two decorations while serving in World War I.

CASABLANCA CHESTERFIELD

Associated during most of the war with General Patton, a versatile fighting man, Major Virgil E. McDANIEL, of Bellrose, Long Island, turned in an all-around noteworthy performance himself, although he was not a battlefield officer. In Washington he had a key role in planning the invasion of Africa. When the campaign began, McDaniel was put to work supervising railroad and power systems as construction and electrical engineer.

He was the FIRST American officer to greet President Roosevelt when the chief executive arrived for the Casablanca conference, and the last to bid him good-bye. The major was entrusted with the job of providing housing arrangements for the notable visitors and setting up precautionary guards against possible enemy attacks from the air.

MILITANT MEDICOS

The medical department personnel of the Army were not eligible to wear the combat-infantry badge. They could have displayed the token of unusual service proudly for their contribution was noteworthy. More than 100 physicians were killed in action at the beginning of the last year of the war. Of the 113 doctors who died while in military service in 1944, 20 died in airplane accidents and 70 gave their lives in combat.

Homeward-bound concessions under a systematic program for the medicos began early in July, 1945. Major Wallace P. RITCHIE, of St. Paul, Minnesota, was the FIRST medical officer to leave the Army under the point-discharge system. He served in North Africa, and later in Italy.

BEACHHEAD BELLIGERENT

The trusty LSTs (landing ships) went off to the war on Navy Day, October 27, 1942. The FIRST of all the "sea-going trucks" was the one skippered by Lieutenant William D. HENDERSON, of St. Louis, Missouri. The destination was Oran. It was a 35-day trip. Training for the turbulent days ahead consumed several months' time in African waters. Then came action when the first Allied convoy went into the harbor at Bizerte, upon the fall of that Tunisian port.

On the way to the invasion of Sicily, this amphibious craft shot down two attacking Nazi planes. Eighteen air raids were encountered in a period of 48 hours. Frequent hauling of supplies from Bizerte to Sicily followed.

Then, at Salerno, Italy, this ship was the FIRST of the LSTs to hit the beach. In the Anzio invasion the craft survived sixteen enemy air raids. Next were the "milk runs" between England and France.

Old Reliable LST 383 was still going strong after contacting eight beachheads and plodding along on other missions for a stretch of seventeen months overseas, during which not a single crewman was given or asked for a day off.

ENGAGEMENTS EVERYWHERE

There was another LST, commanded by Lieutenant Audrey STRICKLAND, of Atlanta, Georgia, which was the FIRST of its naval classification to return to the United States from the European War. This ship was also assigned with the amphibious forces in North Africa for the jump to Sicily. Carrying troops, tanks and supplies in this campaign,

she then hot-footed it over to the Indian Ocean, where tanks were landed in support of British troops assailing Jap positions near Arakan. From there this craft backtracked for anti-Hitlerian duty, hitting the Normandy beaches on D-day in France. All told, the ship ran up 35,000 miles of cruising in behalf of Uncle Sam.

PLENTIFUL PETTICOATS

Many members of the Women's Army Corps served behind the lines in the African campaign. Although the battlefields were "off limits" for these Wacs, they were close by when Bizerte and Tunis fell. They worked at headquarters while high officers were planning the invasion of Sicily. The "GI petticoats" numbered 65,000 on all fronts during the war.

Captain Frances MARQUIS, of New York, commanded the FIRST unit of Wacs to land in North Africa. These "rookies" of the pioneer feminine expeditionary force were 191 strong. They arrived late in January, 1943. Some replaced men officers on desk duty.

Private Margaret H. (Peewee) MALONEY, of Rochester, New York, was the FIRST Wac to be decorated for bravery. Only 4 feet, 11 inches in height, she saved a 6-foot soldier from a pool of burning gasoline.

Sergeant Ella C. WRIGHT, of Kalama, Washington, was the FIRST enlisted member of the Wacs to be awarded the Legion of Merit as a result of her "exceptional conduct" as a telephone operator in Africa and Italy, being responsible for the switchboard at Allied headquarters.

Captain Ethel E. LARSEN, of Kimballton, Iowa, was the FIRST member of the Army nursing corps in North Africa to be appointed a captain.

NEGRO NAPOLEON

The FIRST American expeditionary force to set foot in Africa was led ashore by a Negro, Private Napoleon E. TAYLOR, of Baltimore, Maryland. The landing was made in

Liberia on June 17, 1942. Troops were installed there five months before the invasion of French North Africa.

Leaping off the first boat ashore, Taylor delivered a carefully rehearsed speech, saying to the few wondering natives on the beach: "Liberians! We are here to join hands and fight together until the world is free of tyrannical dictators."

LIBYAN LEGION

United States troops came to grips with the Nazis before D-day in Morocco and Algeria. Elements of the Army were attached to the British 8th Army in the late spring of 1942, west of Tobruk, in the campaign to prevent the Axis from seizing Alexandria.

Captain Charles C. STELLING, of Augusta, Georgia, commanded the FIRST American unit to encounter the German forces on the desert in Libya. Nine enemy tanks were knocked out in two days of heavy fighting in mid-June. There were no United States casualties.

ROOSEVELT RECONNAISSANCE

Brigadier General Elliott ROOSEVELT, one of several of the president's sons in the service, and a radio executive in Texas in private life, once opined that his role in action against the Axis was "not encouraging for a long life." This was not a rash statement, for his job was to fly "with no more protection than a jack rabbit."

He wound up his war adventures as commander of the 325th Photographic Reconnaissance Wing, made up of 5,000 officers and men who served in all major combat theaters contested by the legions of Mussolini and Hitler. Roosevelt called his men "this war's 'Buffalo Bills' and 'Kit Carsons'," because of their accomplishments as scout-plane pilots.

The general himself courted many dangers. He personally rolled up 1,100 flying hours. That included 300 on combat missions. He piloted single-controlled planes on 30 of his flights. Often Roosevelt rode near the ground in "dicing"

operations, and sometimes on a single mission he would take pictures of as many as 20 so-called "targets," risking enemy flak and AA fire from the ground each time. Elliott was chased by patrol planes; survived a mid-air collision with a transport craft; and once escaped by a matter of three feet from being hit by Axis fire when his motor was smashed by the explosive.

Roosevelt was the FIRST Army man to lead any force into Nigeria. Photos were obtained of African terrain which directed the ground troops in their squeeze against Nazi Marshal Rommel. His pilots obtained aerial photos of Sicily for three months before the invasion. He was awarded the Legion of Merit for his "outstanding contribution to the success of the Tunisian and Sicilian campaign and of the initial operations in Italy." He was a captain at the outset of his military career. His request to resign so that he could register for the draft was rejected by his commanding officer. In 1943, Elliott spurned a desk job in order to go out personally in his plane and photograph American bombing results in Sicily.

EL HAMMA HAVOC

The FIRST Army fighter pilots to see action over the Egyptian desert were commanded by Brigadier General Aubrey C. STRICKLAND, of Birmingham, Alabama and Palo Alto, California. His pilots helped to break the backs of German resistance in the El Hamma sector. He spread particular havoc on the enemy in actions of August and September, 1942. The general later served as garrison commander and military governor of Pantelleria Island, in the Mediterranean.

Major Claremont E. WHEELER, of San Jose, California, was the FIRST fighter pilot of the U. S. Air Forces to take part in operations over the Egyptian desert. He fired the first American shot there against an enemy plane.

Lieutenant Jack S. WILSON, of Benton City, Washington, was the FIRST pilot to be shot down by an Axis an-

tagonist on the desert, but he emerged from the affair even-steven by bagging one of the enemy aircraft.

The FIRST of General Strickland's pilots to drop a bomb in the Egyptian desert was Major Glade B. BILBY, of Skidmore, Missouri. He was leader of the "Black Scorpion" squadron which shot down 70 Axis planes and destroyed or damaged scores of others in thousands of sorties. This outfit was termed a leading factor in clearing the Luftwaffe out of the skies while following the British 8th Army all the way from El Alamein to Tunisia and the Mareth Line. His unit was the 64th Fighting Squadron of the 57th Group.

Bilby bailed out into the sea when he had engine trouble over Messina, Sicily, in July, 1943, and was picked up the next morning by a rescue plane. His life was saved by a colored scarf which he waved to attract the attention of his rescuer.

"SHOW ME" STATE SHOWMAN

On a Palm Sunday—April 18, 1943—a force of American pilots trapped a large flight of Hitler's air force off Cape Bon, near Tunisia, and knocked 74 of them out of the skies, including 58 large transports. The leader in that knock-down-and-drag-out air extravaganza was Colonel Arthur G. SALISBURY, of Sedalia, Missouri. Before rising in rank next to that of a general, he had been commander of the FIRST American squadron to operate over the Egyptian desert. His force downed 148 enemy planes in ten months after arrival at the Nile Delta, in July, 1942. The unit was known as the "Fighting Cocks" of the 57th Fighter Group, which latter organization was subsequently led by this officer.

Salisbury's dazzling Warhawk pilots gave the FIRST protection for any convoy of troops going to invade and capture Lampedusa Island in the Mediterranean, June 11, 1943, and cleared the way for Allied bombers in subduing Pantelleria Island.

Off Sicily, the group sank five Axis ships and numerous other water craft and barges. In this campaign the Missou-

rian was forced to bail out of a crippled plane but returned safely after being hit by flak 35 miles behind the enemy lines.

Salisbury was leader of the FIRST air raid ever conducted by American planes against the foe in Yugoslavia. The colonel later became commander of a wing of Thunderbolt fighter-bomber planes—the FIRST advanced unit of single-seater aircraft to operate from United States bases established in France.

The Missourian was the youngest colonel in the Army when promoted to that rank at the age of 25.

MIAMI MIX-UP

“Enemy plane over Florida!”

The message flashed to Morrison Air Field, near Miami, was correct. But it was soon discovered the flyers were American, although they came from Egypt.

The mixed-up situation was explained by the commander of the plane, Major Walter E. NEWBY, of Reedley, California. The German JU-88 bomber had been captured by the British on Cyprus Island. The Americans wanted it for “guinea-pig” tests. So it was flown to Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio, by two airmen—this major and Lieutenant G. W. COOK, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

They were the FIRST Americans to bring an enemy plane across the Atlantic. The flight was made from Cairo, in Africa, to Ohio in the United States in five and a half days, arriving October 14, 1943.

Another aeronautical accomplishment recorded at Wright Field, Ohio, involved a paratrooper who died in Egypt some months later. The soldier was Lieutenant Alexis DISTER, of Washington, D. C. and Litchfield, Connecticut, who became the FIRST human pickup in a new and successful technique developed by the Army Air Forces for taking passengers off the ground with scarcely a jolt. The mechanism was devised in part to rescue stranded airmen forced down in inaccessible locations. Dister's death was the result

of infantile paralysis and had no connection with his pickup experience.

EGYPTIAN ENTREE

The FIRST United States troops to enter the Eastern Mediterranean war zone were led by Major General Russell L. MAXWELL, of Oakdale, Illinois and Washington D. C. Operations were out of Egypt, with headquarters at Cairo. The general was later decorated by King George for the important role his supply department played in the victories of the British 8th Army in Africa; for developing the Trans-Persian railway; and for forwarding material aid to Russia while he commanded the Middle East forces. Maxwell was transferred to Washington early in 1943 to fill the post of assistant chief of the War Department staff in charge of supply, later commanding Camp Ellis, in Illinois. In World War I, he commanded the Army's largest powder manufacturing arsenal; and in 1919 served in the army of occupation in the Rhineland.

Captain Thomas J. CARTER, of Arlington, Virginia, organized the FIRST contingent of Wacs ever assigned to duty in the Middle East, arriving at Cairo, Egypt, January 6, 1944.

Captain C. B. CUTLER, of Kenilworth, Illinois, led the FIRST convoy of American trucks, loaded with war supplies for Russia, through the Persian corridor in the opening of the final link of a 17,000-mile route, in April, 1943.

ROYAL RECEPTION

An air general who flew more than a million miles in 28 years turned his attention to diplomacy in the midst of warfare, and more than made the grade as an envoy to royalty.

The officer was Major General Ralph ROYCE, of Hancock, Michigan, and a native of Marquette in the same state. He headed the FIRST American military mission ever to

enter Saudi Arabia, and completed successful introductory talks with King Ibn Saud on economic and military questions. The get-together affair was ostensibly the result of a desire on the part of the Allies to obtain transportation and supply concessions in the Middle East through the offices of the Arabian Kingdom.

Royce opposed the Japs before transferring to the Atlantic side. While chief of staff of the Southwest Pacific Air Force, he led a great raid of thirteen bombers against the enemy in the Philippines.

With the 9th Air Force in the Middle East, the general had command of all air activities in Africa, except that under the jurisdiction of General Eisenhower. He became commander of the new First Tactical Air Force which supported the operations of General Devers' 6th Army group of ground fighters in Eastern France.

Royce was the FIRST American pilot to lead a reconnaissance mission from France over the German lines.

In World War I, he commanded the First Aero Squadron in France, where he was awarded the Croix de Guerre.

Sergeant Harry T. BRUNDIGE, 3d, of St. Louis, Missouri, was the FIRST American to join the Royal Air Force in the Middle East. He later affiliated with the AAF. The Flying Fortress "The Mugger," on which this airman was a waist gunner, exploded while on a bombing raid to Laval, France, on July 4, 1943. Reported missing and probably killed in action, Brundidge was located months later in an enemy prison camp, being eventually liberated by the Russians from a Pomeranian stockade along with 6,000 other Allied flyers.

EQUILS' ESCAPE

Ammunition was all too plentiful in Tripoli harbor, in North Africa, on the night of March 19, 1943. Cargo ships were loaded with the explosives, and that made it unhealthy for the crews when Axis planes roared in on a bombing attack.

One Allied vessel blew up. Alongside it had been another craft which got away so fast that the skipper was afterwards decorated for his foresight and heroism. The captain was Chief Officer Walter A. EQUILS, of Washington, D. C. He was the FIRST member of the Merchant Marine ever awarded a medal by the Army.

Equils saved his ship by his quick leavetaking from the danger zone, and was about 2,000 feet away when the stricken vessel exploded. He was awarded the Silver Star.

CHAPTER 2

FIRST MEDITERRANEAN OFFENSIVE

Sicily, the gateway to Italy and France, was stormed by the Allies at 10:10 P.M., on July 9, 1943, nine weeks after the end of the successful campaign in North Africa.

The attack was widely acclaimed as the opening of the "second European front," although the continental mainland was not involved directly.

It was a continuing phase of the Battle of the Mediterranean. American planes had participated for seven months, prior to the invasion, in the "softening up" of the island.

The "first crack in the fortress of Europe" was brought about when another island, Pantelleria, surrendered to the Allies on June 11. This "air gateway to Sicily and Sardinia" had been bombed for twenty successive days. An attack from the air on the day before occupation was represented as three times as destructive as the worst air raid ever experienced by the city of London. In fact, the capture was hailed as a "landmark in the history of military aviation," because it was the first time such an enemy stronghold had been conquered as a result of air power alone. The shattering of Italian morale in the operation was regarded as more advantageous than the seizure of the island itself.

One of the foremost fighter groups in clearing the way

for the big Allied bombers in subduing Pantelleria was also the FIRST to land on the island, only 45 miles east of Cape Bon, Tunisia. The commander of the outfit was Colonel William W. MOMYER, of Seattle, Washington and Hempstead, New York. Pilot of a Warhawk, he personally shot down eight Axis planes, which fact he never bothered to publicize because he had stern views on "scores" and did not approve of frolicking in the air. The Momyer group was also one of the first combat units to operate from Sicilian airfields.

Another group of fighter planes aiding in the victory at Pantelleria was led by Colonel Benjamin O. DAVIS, Jr., of Washington, D. C., and New York City. He led the FIRST all-Negro outfit to operate in foreign service. His father was the only Negro general in the United States Army.

LAMPEDUSA LIQUIDATION

The island of Lampedusa gave up the ghost on June 12, less than eight hours after the capitulation of Pantelleria. This was another case of the enemy being unable to stand excess blitzing from the air. In addition, British warships had bombarded the island, 85 miles southeast of Pantelleria, for 24 hours.

Colonel (then Lieutenant Colonel) John D. STEVENSON, of Laramie, Wyoming, group skipper of fighter-bombers, was the FIRST to inform airforce headquarters of the signal indicating the complete surrender of Lampedusa. His force had inflicted great damage to the base there.

Stevenson commanded the FIRST A-36 unit in action in the Mediterranean, preferring to call the new version of the early Mustang plane the "Invader." The Wyoming colonel led the FIRST dive-bombing operations attempted against Pantelleria. He was later shot down over Sicily and fell into German hands, but was promoted to the rank of colonel while a prisoner of war.

AMPHIBIOUS ARTISTRY

In the Allied strike against Sicily at "the under-belly of the Axis in Europe," the naval forces of Great Britain and the United States accomplished "the greatest amphibious expedition ever undertaken" and the FIRST in European waters. The chief American commander of this operation was Admiral (then Vice Admiral) Henry Kent HEWITT, of Hackensack, New Jersey. A total of 3266 surface craft—of all types, from battleships to motor torpedo boats—participated. The Americans took care of 38 miles of shore line, and the British 37. Hewitt, who won the naval victory which made it possible for the United States to occupy North African territory, later also commanded task fleets in the invasions of Italy and southern France.

Vice Admiral (then Rear Admiral) Alan G. KIRK, of Black Point, Connecticut, and a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was the FIRST subordinate commander in the Sicilian operations to return to the United States, after his task force wound up its participation without losing a ship. His unit brought back 5,000 Axis prisoners. Kirk commanded 2,200 ships and small craft, predominately American, in the Western Task Force which put the American Army ashore on D-day in the subsequent invasion of northern France, where he became commander of Naval Forces.

WINGED WARRIORS

Spearheading the invasion of Sicily were soldiers who "rode into battle on wings." They landed a few hours before the arrival of ground troops on ships, from transports and gliders in the FIRST airborne blitzkrieg across the western Mediterranean. Director of the American operation was Lieutenant General (then Major General) Matthew B. RIDGWAY, of Fort Monroe, Virginia, commander of the 82d Airborne Division.

The FIRST United Nations soldier to land in Sicily was Sergeant Philip FOLEY, of Charleston, Massachusetts, one

of the paratroopers. His mother, who had waited for months for news of him, died a few hours before word of his feat was flashed to America.

Colonel Charles W. KOUNS, of Ardsley, New York, was leader of the FIRST regimental combat team reaching the ground.

A pioneer jumpmaster in the operation was Lieutenant Thomas E. McKEAGE, Jr., of St. Louis, Missouri. His platoon was the FIRST to touch the soil of the island.

Of the entire sky army, Private Francis L. REEVE, of St. Louis, Missouri, became the FIRST wounded paratrooper to return to the United States.

CERNY CIRCUS

One of the big shows in the invasion of Sicily was "Cerny Circus." The outfit, known officially as the 64th Troop Carrier Group, landed parachutists on a big scale. Skipper of these C-47 transport planes was Colonel John CERNY, of Harrison, Idaho, and Spokane, Washington.

The Circus put on an act in North Africa that had not been advertised on the billboards. Eight of its officers and enlisted men rescued three French generals who had been lost for a week after being forced down in the sandy desert wastes hundreds of miles from Algiers. As a consequence, they were presented with the FIRST medals to be awarded any troop carrier command flyers on overseas duty by a foreign power in World War II. The decorations were from the grateful French Army.

Cerny's outfit also landed parachutists in the invasion of South France, moved two divisions 900 miles in India, from Calcutta to Dimapur, where the British were engaged in repelling a Jap invasion of the Imphal Plain, and made a swift transfer of troops from France to Italy to reinforce General Clark's Army in the Po Valley.

SKY TRAIN TO SICILY

A glider filled with British Tommies was towed by the FIRST American transport plane to take off from Africa for D-day operations in Sicily. Pilot of this C-47 was Major Leonard J. BARROW, of New Iberia and New Orleans, Louisiana, and Los Angeles, California. A *Philadelphia Inquirer* correspondent aboard the transport described Sicily as a "panorama of fires and blinking guns" after an 187-mile-an-hour trip "on top of Dante's Inferno."

Another aboard the plane was Colonel Glynne M. JONES, of Lafayette and New Orleans, Louisiana, operations chief of the Troop Carrier Command. His other achievements included landing of paratroopers in the invasion of France and in Holland. In Normandy, France, on June 23, 1944, he commanded a sky train which for the FIRST time "snatched" a glider into the air from a combat area, a new technique to salvage these pilotless craft.

REDOUBTABLE RANGER

Organizer of the FIRST American Ranger battalion to see action against the Axis, Colonel William O. (Bill) DARBY, of Fort Smith, Arkansas, was widely acclaimed as the greatest task-force leader of his rank in the war. He directed the FIRST American unit to reach the south Sicilian shore, and almost at the outset of the fighting he personally knocked out an enemy tank when he fearlessly rode into the heart of battle-ridden Gela. Soon afterwards, he captured several other towns and gathered 400 prisoners in one of his forages.

Colonel Darby and his Rangers infiltrated coast towns not yet attacked by regular Allied troops after landing at Anzio, and late in the campaign in northern Italy he led an amphibious force which raided the slain Mussolini's villa at Gargano, in April, 1945. At this time he was assistant commander of the 10th Mountain Division. Daring in the extreme, he finally took a chance and lost. He was killed by

Nazi artillery fire in the closing phase of the Battle of Italy, and was given posthumous promotion to the rank of brigadier general—an honor he had often refused because it would have moved him out of the commandship of the Rangers he loved.

COMPLETE CONTROL

Gela was the toughest place to capture and hold of the entire coastal invasion strip. This town—where Aeschylus, the Greek dramatist who had invented tragedy, died—fairly seethed with enemy counterattacks for two days after its fall.

The early uncertainties of the situation were such that headquarters in North Africa was not informed of the capture by the American leaders on the field, having been given the FIRST news of the event by Captain W. E. FOSTER, Jr., of San Antonio, Texas, pilot of a Flying Fortress. The airman reported, after flying over the scene, that Gela was under complete control.

The FIRST flag taken ashore in the invasion at Gela was retrieved by Machinist Mate Malvern CAPSTICK, of Overland, in St. Louis County, Missouri, after it had been torn from the mast of a landing boat as a result of enemy fire.

SICILIAN SENTIMENTALITY

Italian soldiers were so happy when Major William L. LOCKETT, of Norman, Oklahoma, gave them an opportunity to surrender, near Castelvetro, that they staged a dance on a harvest field. This officer, an artilleryman, was the FIRST American to enter the Sicilian town, on July 21, when he led a parade of jeeps to the airport, where more than 100 Axis airplanes lay smashed. Private Sylvester MISEL, of Girard, Ohio, drove the FIRST jeep into Castelvetro.

At Palermo there was more effusiveness, but this time the inhabitants showered the doughboys with flowers and fruit. Lieutenant Ralph J. YATES, of Austin, Texas, led the

FIRST force into the surrendered capital city, on July 22, after a drive which General Patton called the "greatest blitz in history" up to that time. Yates later led a patrol of 27 doughboys into Messina, capturing the city and completing the conquest of the island. Fifty Italian troops were there to await surrender.

The Americans were applauded by the natives when they drove into Barrafranca, five days before the enemy fold-up at Palermo. The FIRST infantry troops to go into the former city, behind the tanks, were led by Lieutenant Allen FERRY, of Alton Bay, New Hampshire.

PARATROOPER PIONEER

Thirty parachutists armed with bazookas landed near Vittoria and then boldly went in and captured the city. Naturally, their tenure was of short duration, considering their number. However, the information they obtained was invaluable to the friendly forces that came along soon afterwards and seized the place on a permanent basis.

Leader of this flock of sky troops was Colonel William T. RYDER, of St. Louis, Missouri. He was called "the Father of American Paratroopers." This is not surprising, for he was the FIRST man ever to volunteer for military parachute duty; the FIRST to make a jump in the Army; and organized the FIRST paratroop school.

Later in the war, Ryder went to Ormoc, on Leyte Island in the Philippines, and became airborne advisor on the staff of General MacArthur.

WHOLESALE WARFARE

The "Fighting 45th" Division, green troops led by Lieutenant General (then Major General) Troy H. MIDDLETON, of Hazelhurst, Mississippi and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, wrested a 1000-square-mile hunk of Sicily from the enemy over a period of only three weeks. The unit took a position on the island at the right flank of Patton's 7th Army,

and in a week's time captured Scogletti, San Croce Camerina, Comiso, Ragusa and Vittoria. Middleton's men took the FIRST Axis air base to fall to the Allies, at Comiso.

The general who later captured Brest, France, along with 36,389 prisoners, and commanded his division in the Italian campaign, executed the FIRST liberation of American prisoners of war, at Ragusa.

Sergeant Allen B. HUCKABEE, of Temple, Texas, was the FIRST Italian-held prisoner to be freed by the Fighting 45th. A top-turret gunner on a Flying Fortress, he had been captured after bailing out of his crippled plane. At the age of 43, Huckabee was reputedly the oldest combat man in the U. S. Air Force. He shot down five attacking enemy planes of a force of 100 before his plane was crippled on his final mission. The daring airman was taken by his captors to a hospital, where he was found to be suffering from eleven bullet wounds.

TERRORIZED TROINA

When the Americans approached Troina, they found the town had been made a fortress by the Nazis. The siege lasted for a week. The most bloody fighting of the Sicilian campaign took place in the mountainous region around the town.

Finally, when the Germans cried quits after three days of raids by Allied planes, the FIRST word of the enemy retreat was brought back by Private John KOSTECHAK, of Cairnbrook, Pennsylvania. On the strength of this scout's information the doughboys marched in and took possession.

Terrorized and almost starved, the stricken citizens gave a wild greeting to the FIRST troops entering Troina under the leadership of Captain Everett L. BOOTH, of East Chicago, Indiana.

Booth is the man who led his company in the recapture of woods (seventeen months after his Troina exploit) near Mirfeld, Belgium, where an American outpost had previ-

ously been taken by the Nazis. His men took thirty prisoners in the two-hour operation.

RANDAZZO RUPTURE

The Axis line was ruptured at Randazzo. The Battle of Sicily turned into a foot race for Messina—the last goal—after the capture of the former, a road center and ancient mountain village ten miles north of Mount Etna.

The FIRST American unit to reach the last high ground before Randazzo was led by Lieutenant Lawrence **LANG-LAND**, of Yorkville, Illinois. The same patrol made the FIRST contact with British reconnaissance parties pushing up northwest from Bronte.

Major Philip **TINLEY**, of Baltimore, Maryland, was commander of the FIRST battalion to push through Randazzo.

MEDITERRANEAN MISADVENTURE

Captain Giles B. **WITHINGTON**, of Richmond Heights, in St. Louis County, Missouri, was forced to swim to reach the shore of Sicily. His landing craft had been caught on a reef. He was not resentful, for in spite of his misadventure, he won the distinction of leading the FIRST anti-aircraft unit to arrive for the invasion.

The FIRST Signal Corps photographic officer to get to Sicily and back to Africa was Lieutenant Robert **LONGINI**, of Chicago, Illinois. His pictures were a part of the historical record of the D-day battlefront.

Captain Edith W. **SWANEY**, of Youngstown, Ohio, was chief of the FIRST unit of Army nurses to reach Sicily.

DECORATED DOG

“Chips,” a German shepherd dog, burned his mouth by twisting a pair of enemy machine guns out of position. That won him the decoration of the Order of the Purple Heart.

On top of that, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross with the Silver Star, being the FIRST war dog to receive a medal for heroism. His handler was Sergeant William M. HAULK, of Macomb, Illinois.

It was during the Sicilian campaign that the dog cleaned out an Italian pillbox, and during the struggle he tore one enemy fighter's arm off, ripped another's chest open, and caused four more to surrender when the American doughboys arrived. Later, Chips helped capture a hill position.

LUCKY LANDINGS

Luck was with the bomber "Dirty Girty" the day she was crippled by enemy flak and forced to land. The pilot, Lieutenant Earl HAMMOND, of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, brought the plane down on an emergency strip in an area which had been in enemy hands. The crew afterwards were jubilant, because their aircraft was credited with being the FIRST Flying Fortress to land in Sicily after the Allied invasion. But when they emerged from Girty, they were prepared for the worst until they learned that the strip had been captured by friendly forces three days previously. It was the 63rd mission for the bomber, which at the time of the mishap was returning from a raid on San Giovanni Harbor, in Italy.

On the same day, July 17, a Liberator plane piloted by R. GENTRY, of Baltimore, Maryland, became the FIRST Allied bomber to come down in Sicily. In this instance, the descent was forced by damage done to the ship by enemy fighters attacking the Americans after a raid on Naples. The landing was made on Cape Pachino, which had been taken over by the British.

HOUSE—HALE—HALL

A great series of dogfights began after Major General Edwin J. HOUSE, of Jamesville, New York, and a native of Syracuse in the same state, established the FIRST tactical

air force for operating in support of an American Army. The new technique was put into effect during the Sicilian campaign. The outfit, known as the 12th Air Support Command, not only won fame contributing to victories by the ground troops but after six months of operations, including the Italian campaign, virtually drove Hitler's air offensive forces out of the skies.

Lieutenant Charles F. HALE, of Ware, Massachusetts, was the FIRST Warhawk pilot to shoot down a Nazi Focke-Wulf over Sicily during the invasion operations.

Captain Charles E. HALL, of Brazil, Indiana, was the FIRST Negro flyer to destroy an enemy plane in combat. The victory was attained during an attack on Castelvetro, Sicily. This pilot carried out 108 missions in a year, bagged two other Axis aircraft, and was also the FIRST Negro to win the Distinguished Flying Cross.

LLOYD'S LADY

A B-26 medium bomber, once regarded as a jinx by her crew, wound up her career in combat in a blaze of glory. She was known as "Old Hellcat," and was the FIRST Marauder plane to complete 50 fighting missions. Flight No. 1 was a raid over Tunisia on December 31, 1942, and her swan song in battle action was rendered in a run over Sicily, on July 13, of the following year.

The "old lady of the skies," piloted by Captain Bryan M. LLOYD, of Dallas, Texas, carried many battle scars when she flew to America for an exhibition tour, with a record of sinking four Axis ships and downing nine planes. Captain G. H. JACKSON, of Grants Pass, Oregon, was an earlier pilot of this bomber.

NO SISSY OVER SICILY

Proving an aerial cameraman is not to be regarded as a sissy in actual combat, Lieutenant James M. BRAY, of Hollywood, California and New York, became the FIRST news-

reel picture-taker to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross, as a result of his feat in shooting down two German Messerschmitts. One air victory was attained in March, 1943, when he took a regular gunner's place on a bombing mission over Messina, Sicily; and the other enemy aircraft was bagged in the following month, when he laid aside his camera and served as a substitute for a wounded waist gunner.

ENEMY EXIT

The last Germans out of Sicily fled at 8 P.M., on August 16, after a period of evacuation from the battered city of Messina lasting ten days.

The FIRST American forces to arrive at the metropolis on the following morning were commanded by Lieutenant Eugene PHILLIPS, of Royston, Georgia.

Sergeant John C. BEGOVITCH, of Plymouth, California, led the FIRST platoon to enter Messina. Only one shot was fired in opposition. That was by a sniper concealed behind a ruined building. Begovitch responded with his gun and killed the offender.

Although many of the inhabitants were starving, the soldiers were met by 200 citizens with a 30-piece band.

The FIRST doughboys, led by a ranking officer, marched into the city at 5:30 A.M. Their commander was Major Grover WILSON, of Washington, D. C.

NEPTUNE NONPLUSSED

Many vessels stricken at sea in wartime are afloat today because the "impossible" was often accomplished by Captain Edward ELLSBERG, of Westfield, New Jersey, and a native of New Haven, Connecticut. He was the FIRST American salvage officer on Mediterranean duty. His activities were varied.

The captain, known as the Navy's top-ranking salvage expert, restored scuttled ships and constructed floating harbors after more than one D-day. There are even warships

that would have been permanently embraced by Neptune but for Ellsberg's resourcefulness.

Sometimes he would get word a warship was about to sink. More often than not he got to the scene and saved the craft. His job of raising a wrecked drydock capable of handling 10,000-ton cruisers at Massawa, Eritrea, was his achievement in one of the greatest mass-salvage operations in history. Ellsberg's small crew of divers saved many of the twenty Axis ships scuttled by the Italians at the same African naval base prior to the capture of the port by the British.

Adolf Hitler wrecked the ports of Europe as fast as he lost them. The Allies then had the job of clearing the harbors.

Captain Thomas J. ALLISON, of San Diego, California, was skipper of the FIRST Army salvage ship to be constructed for a fleet carrying out some of these restoration assignments.

JOSTLING JUMPING JACKS

The PT boats of the Mediterranean were "impertinent," in the eyes of the crews of larger craft, and were called "jumping-jacks" by the enemy because of their uncontrolled antics in rough water. But they were otherwise regarded as a real threat for their attacks on shipping and their spying. These phantom raiders were also tremendously efficient in guarding invasion fleets.

Then there was the time when a small collection of patrol torpedo boats, skippered by Lieutenant Edwin A. DUBOSE, of Fort Worth, Texas, became the FIRST squadron to bring about the surrender of an island. This was done on Stromboli. The feat was repeated in the occupation of the islands of Lipari and Procida. It took thirty minutes to bring about the capitulation of Stromboli.

CLOAK-AND-DAGGER DELIVERER

Lieutenant Harry Ringling NORTH, a member of the famous circus family, of Sarasota, Florida, was the FIRST

American to land on the island of Ponza, while accompanying a Navy Mediterranean task force. There he delivered Tito Zaniboni from prison. The latter had been made a captive because of his reputed attempt on the life of Mussolini in 1926. In the same operation North freed the Duke of Camerini, another Italian anti-Fascist.

A member of the OSS (Office of Strategic Service), North was also the key figure in capturing Stromboli Island, after participating in a secret mission to Italy leading up to the seizure. Playing his role in the "cloak-and-dagger" outfit dealing in espionage and super-secret intelligence, the lieutenant instituted salvage operations to recover tons of equipment, including an entire midget Italian submarine, which he turned over to the Navy's G-2 men.

DESTROYER'S DESTRUCTION

The FIRST recorded victory of United States fighter aircraft over an enemy warship in the southeast Mediterranean area was credited to Captain William S. GATLING, of Tarboro, North Carolina. Pilot of a Warhawk plane, he bombed an Italian destroyer, set it afire, and was responsible for its eventual sinking as a result of one more direct hit by a fellow flyer.

Later, Gatling became the FIRST Allied pilot in the Mediterranean theater to complete 190 combat missions, while flying a Thunderbolt, and subsequently ran his score up to 200 in a single tour of duty.

CHAPTER 3

FIRST UNITED STATES CAMPAIGN IN EUROPE

The capitulation of the government of Italy, shorn of the influence of Mussolini, was hailed as a "great victory" by President Roosevelt. On the day of this event the chief executive spoke to the nation. The reference was to a secret military armistice signed in Sicily.

Said the President: "We must not delude ourselves that the armistice means the end of the war in the Mediterranean."

Then he announced that, at that moment, United States Army forces were landing from invasion craft in the "Naples area," one-third of the way up the Italian "boot."

The Gulf of Salerno suddenly became a Devil's Cauldron. An entire sector of 1,000 square miles of sea swarmed with a huge fleet of war vessels.

Six days previously, on September 3, 1943, the British had landed on the "toe" of Italy. Thus began a campaign by the armies of two nations that was to last 22 months, bearing out the White House prediction that a long and costly war seemed in prospect.

American military leaders wanted to strike at Italy sooner but were forced to await the signing of the armistice. After this event was announced, and a few hours before the attack on Salerno, the Germans north of the Appenines abandoned their display of "tolerance," taking over Milan and other large cities from the local civil authorities.

The delay in the invasion gave the enemy time to send nineteen divisions into the country, in addition to seven divisions already there.

So, when the 5th Army, commanded by General Mark

CLARK, of Highland Park, Illinois, squared off for hostilities, the Allied invaders were outnumbered and did not enjoy the preferred advantage of surprise. Prior to this FIRST American World War II venture on the European continent, the general had distinguished himself in the famous secret mission to French North Africa by laying the groundwork for the FIRST U. S. land invasion across the Atlantic, in 1942.

Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) Max F. SCHNEIDER, of Shenandoah, Iowa, was the FIRST of the September invading forces to set foot on Italy. Commander of the 5th Ranger Infantry Battalion, he was later cited for securing a section of beachhead on D-day in southern France, despite intense Nazi opposition.

Captain Timothy CLEARY, of Boston, Massachusetts, observation officer, was the FIRST of all Americans to reach Italy. He crossed the Strait of Messina with the British on September 3. An artillery observer, his mission was to send back information on enemy gunfire.

DEATH DEALING DRAFTEE

"Whispering death" vaulted into Europe on the morning of August 16, 1943.

The occasion was the firing of the FIRST shell into Italy by American artillery, eighteen days before the beginning of the Allied offensive on the continent.

It was nine hours before the last of the fleeing Germans bade adieu to Sicily after an inglorious campaign. That day was also the starting time of the last battle on that island, climaxed in the occupation of Messina before the rising of another sun.

A Long Tom named "Draftee," measuring 24 feet in length and 8½ feet in height, was hauled up by a battery commanded by Lieutenant William B. DOUGHERTY, of Dallas, Texas. The targets were the big Italian coastal guns on the mainland.

This particular gun's shells were usually fired by Private Albert (Red) KEEL, of Atoka, Tennessee. But on this occa-

sion the colonel of the battalion wanted to do the honors.

So it was Lieutenant Colonel George HALLIDAY, of West Lafayette, Indiana, who jerked the cord of "Draftee" that sent the "whispering" blast into Italy, at Villa San Giovanni, railway and ferry terminus, after Dougherty issued the order to fire.

The 95-pound explosive tore across the strip of water to the objective fifteen miles away. It was also the opening shell of the Battle of Messina Strait.

OBSTACLES OVERCOME

The 36th Division, commanded by Major General Fred L. WALKER, of Columbus, Ohio, was the FIRST unit to go ashore at Salerno.

Despite the thorough planning for the invasion, the outlook was highly discouraging during the first days of fighting. The enemy, unexpectedly, outnumbered the Americans about two to one.

Salerno was captured in two days. But Nazi resistance was more stubborn than had been anticipated in other adjoining sectors, and nearly a week passed before the arrival and placement of other divisions—the 34th and 45th Infantry and the 82d Airborne.

Walker's troops were equal to the occasion. It was the beginning of a 250-mile chase of Field Marshal Kesselring's forces to the north. Walker relinquished the command for another assignment after telling his men their achievements in Italy had been "unparalleled in military history."

The general "called the signals" in the capture of Rome; fought at Anzio and Cassino; and executed a brilliant encircling maneuver around Velletri which paved the way for the capture of the Italian capital city. The division's costliest venture was the "brutal crossing" of the Rapido River, where almost 2,000 men were lost in 24 hours.

BATTLE BEGINS

Those beachheads in the Italian invasion were tough from the beginning. Air support for the doughboys was accounted "perfect." Naval gunnery improved after communications kinks were unraveled. But the Nazis were still bitterly persistent and efficient.

The FIRST attack in the Salerno area was led by infantrymen Lieutenant Colonels Carlos D. SMITH, of Gonzalez, Texas, and Edward B. McCALL, of San Antonio, Texas. Two of their companies lost little time in repelling seven German tanks.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas A. LANE, of Washington, D. C., the AMG chief for the early landing operations, was the FIRST American to set up a civil government on European soil in territory won by the Allies. The date was September 10. He entered Salerno with two aides while the Germans and British were still fighting in the outskirts. The colonel later served as chief labor officer in the Rome area.

"T"—THAT'S TEXAS

"T" patches on their shoulders, denoting they were in a Texas outfit, were worn by the doughboys who squared off for battle at Salerno on D-day. That meant they were members of the "hot," though previously untried (in combat) 36th Division.

They had 1,000 yards to go, with a railroad line their objective. They made it and set up a command post.

The advance was not one of serenity. Enemy machine guns were popping. To establish the beachhead, it was necessary to hold the command post.

Then from a tower Lieutenant Colonel Robert M. IVES, of Houston, Texas, saw thirteen Nazi tanks approaching. He was the FIRST American observation man in World War II to warn against the imminence of an attack by these "iron horses" on the European continent.

A single self-propelled anti-tank gun crew went out to

do battle. They saved the whole beachhead. Led by Lieutenant John W. WHITAKER, of Ft. Worth, Texas, they composed the FIRST anti-tank outfit to stop such an enemy attack on European soil.

They destroyed three of the hostile tanks. Eighteen-year-old Whitaker stationed himself in the middle of the road down which the vehicles were roaring, and fought off the attackers until reinforcements arrived.

SALERNO SUPERMAN

Another Texan, Sergeant (then Private) James M. LOGAN, of Luling, gave substantial individual support in securing the torrid beachhead. Storming forth with a high-powered rifle, he killed three Germans with three shots and then fatally wounded a sniper after racing 200 yards across open terrain and breaking into a house, where he cornered his prey. Logan was the FIRST doughboy to jump ashore at Salerno, and was credited in his one-man-army rampage with being mainly responsible for the successful defense against a Nazi counterattack which had threatened to destroy the American position during the initial critical hours of D-day.

Here are some of his other heroic accomplishments: Singlehandedly delivered the knockout blow that brought about the fall of Velletri, a town on the German defense line below Rome; risked his life repeatedly in killing 25 Nazis, capturing 15; distinguished himself again in the Battle of Rome, where he was wounded; was the second soldier in the war to receive both the Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross.

AUDACIOUS ADMIRAL

A parachutist and his companions trapped at Salerno by Nazi shelling owe their lives to a British rear admiral. Lieutenant John M. SHAHEEN, of Chicago, Illinois, was with a small party of Army and Navy officers when enemy guns

opened up from the hills. Shells fell around them, some not over twenty feet away.

They were cut off from their assault boat when the English admiral came to their rescue in a motor launch, carrying them off to safety.

Shaheen was the FIRST Navy line officer of the war to be certified for the Army, having at the outset of his service been a naval ensign.

Later, he spearheaded a dangerous mission carried out by the OSS (Office of Strategic Service) in obtaining information about secret enemy Navy devices in Italy.

HURRY-UP HOSPITAL

For the first time in the history of any army, medical corps were landed with an invasion force at Salerno. American nurses and doctors followed only a few minutes behind the first assault waves.

Lieutenant Colonel Paul K. SAUER, of New York, New York, directed the FIRST United States evacuation hospital to be set up in Europe. The first soldier patients were received twelve hours after the arrival.

Lieutenant Alys SALTER, of Alexandria, Louisiana, was the FIRST American nurse to land in Italy, leading 56 others to the beachhead battle area. The party waded ashore from a landing craft through ankle-deep water.

AIR ASSAULTS

The customary pre-invasion "softening up" of enemy territory from the air was carried out in southern Italy for weeks before D-day. Mussolini's Hitler-controlled domain, in fact, began to feel the sting of bombing attacks long before there were any set Allied plans to make that country a battleground.

The FIRST raid on Italy by American planes occurred on December 4, 1942. The target was Naples harbor. The Italian fleet there was represented as "stacked like cord-

wood." A terrific blow was dealt the warcraft unable to escape.

Director of the aerial expedition was Lieutenant General (then Major General) Lewis H. BRERETON, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, former head of the U. S. Air Forces in India, whose "Bengal Bombers" had been credited with "deciding the fate" of that country.

Brigadier General Richard C. SAUNDERS, of Salt Lake City, Utah, commander of the 98th Bombardment Wing, who became the youngest American general at the age of 28, led the raid on Naples.

Captain S. Thomas T. OMOHUNDRO, of Wagoner, Oklahoma, was flight commander. The attacking bombers were based in Africa.

ROME RAID

The FIRST American raid on Rome occurred July 19, 1943. Vast sections of the city's great railway yards were left in ruins from the terrific blasting. The blitz, by more than 500 heavy and medium bombers, lasted about 150 minutes.

Lieutenant Fred G. WHEELER, a Flying Fortress bombardier, of Redwood City, California, dropped the FIRST U. S. bomb of the war on Rome.

Lieutenant Roscoe NEMER, of Evansville, Indiana, was the youngest pilot at 19, and he gained the reputation of having survived the most close calls of his group during his forty missions in the Italian sector. He was only 17 when he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force before our country entered hostilities.

The FIRST group to launch an assault was commanded by Colonel Samuel J. GORMLEY, of Alhambra, California. The first wave of planes skirted the eastern edge of the historic Italian city. Another highlight during the operations of this aggregation, in the campaign which dislodged Mussolini, was the assault, four days earlier, which resulted in the damaging of three Italian battleships anchored at La Spezia.

Colonel Gormley's outfit also roamed the skies in covering the Allied ground forces waging a victorious campaign in Sicily. During its first nine months of warfare this group shot down 131 Axis planes in combat, probably destroyed 74 more, and damaged an additional 99, besides inflicting great destruction on enemy targets.

INTRODUCTIONS IN ITALY

Great air bases sprang up in Italy in the wake of occupation by the advancing Allied ground forces.

Brigadier General (then Colonel) Robert D. KNAPP, of Auburn, Alabama, was commander of the FIRST bomber group to operate from that country. His Mitchells were also the FIRST to introduce waist and tail guns. The outfit received the presidential citation.

Knapp later became commander of the 12th Air Force Mitchell Bombardment Wing which eventually passed the 50,000 mark in sorties in the Mediterranean theater. The general's original 321st Group, which had several leaders during its many months of operation, finally ran up a total of twenty enemy ships sunk.

Major A. M. BANKS, of Ft. Worth, Texas, was commander of the FIRST American night-fighter squadron to operate from Italian airfields. His Beaufighter planes escorted Allied convoys across the Mediterranean and protected friendly harbors. They were trained in Florida and England by experienced British RAF personnel.

Captain L. V. GOSSICK, of Meadville, Missouri, and Lieutenant Bruce L. MORRISON, of Aspinwall, Pennsylvania, were the FIRST American pilots to set their planes down on the Italian mainland. Their Warhawks landed at the Reggio airfield soon after that base had been occupied by the British, arriving there together while on a mission searching for a missing fellow flyer.

HOT HIDING PLACE

The FIRST American flyer to escape German captors in Italy was Sergeant Laurence MADISON, of Lyndhurst, Ohio, a signal-unit member in the air-service command.

His Mitchell bomber landed on an Axis field near Salerno under the mistaken impression it had been abandoned by the enemy. The crew members were made prisoners. Just then a gasoline explosion wrecked the plane. Madison ran to cover, and in the attending excitement his captors did not notice that he took refuge under the tip of the aircraft's wing.

The plane burned all night but the airman managed to endure the heat. From his hiding place Madison watched the progress of a battle between British forces and the Nazis defending the airstrip. After thirty hours he was able to leave the field undetected and soon found a haven with three 8th Army Tommies.

BISCUIT BOMBING

Spearheading American troops entrenched between two peaks on Mount Maggiore without food were saved by "biscuit bombers."

A technique developed by Major Edwin A. BLAND, Jr., of Waurika, Oklahoma, was tried out for the FIRST time on a large scale when a squadron of A-37 Invader planes dropped K-rations and other infantry attack essentials.

Regular mountain supply trains had been unable to reach the isolated fighting men because of a temporary blockade imposed by the Nazis.

GIPSY GOLIATH

The "Gipsy Troops of the Mediterranean" (the dashing 3d Infantry Division), under the guidance of Major General John W. (Iron Mike) O'DANIEL, of Newark, Delaware and Atlanta, Georgia, did some profitable roving in

behalf of the Allied cause, as attested by the fact that more than thirty of the organization's fighters were awarded the Medal of Honor. One of these was the FIRST to be recorded in Italy.

The presentation was made to Lieutenant David C. WAYBUR, of Piedmont, California, after the reconnaissance platoon, which he led, crossed the Volturno River. His citation for the country's highest medal stemmed from a sort of "Goliath" encounter in Sicily.

Waybur was patrol leader in spearheading the drive to Agrigento. Trapped between a wrecked bridge and four Italian tanks, his small force had only a sub-machine gun for defense and, as may be imagined, their three jeeps were untenable in such an emergency. The lieutenant engaged the leading tank singlehandedly. First he killed two members of the hostile crew; then he sent the "iron warhorse" crashing into the stream bed. Finally, he took a stand while under heavy enemy fire and put the other three tanks to rout. His adversaries were so confused that they all were captured or fled afoot, permitting their "land battleships" to fall into the hands of the little gipsy band of jeep caravanists.

All this happened after Waybur had been wounded. Again, in the Italian campaign near Naples, he became a casualty. He was ordered to return to America for medical treatment after his strenuous action in his second invasion campaign, which also aggravated the first of his two serious wounds.

KILLER KELLY

"Commando," an Army "bad boy," had a particular hobby of destroying Nazi machine-gun nests. In that and other roles he fought his way up the Italian peninsula, managing to kill 40 German soldiers in 70 days of combat. Such was the prowess of Lieutenant Charles E. KELLY, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Reckless, daring, and resourceful, this scout-patrol leader

of the mighty 36th Division was the **FIRST** American serviceman to be awarded the Medal of Honor on the basis of a parade of startling deeds in Italy.

On one occasion, at Altavilla while he was guarding an ammunition storehouse, Kelly tossed mortar shells at Nazis as though they were hand grenades. He had four automatic rifles and burned them all out. His next weapon—and all the time he was firing out of a window covering the withdrawal of his mates from the town—was a bazooka. Finally, he turned an anti-tank gun on the enemy before making his getaway after his all-night feat of “holding off the entire community.”

Kelly was a military “problem child” because he sometimes went A.W.O.L., but that always happened when there was no fighting to be done. Anyway, he was worshiped by his buddies and lionized by the higher officers of his command.

One of Commando’s doting superiors was Captain John C. MORRISEY, of St. Louis, Missouri, whose company boasted of still other men noted for their dazzling exploits. The latter was captured by the Germans and became the **FIRST** soldier from his home city to be liberated by Soviet troops.

SEA SAGA

The only Navy transport to escape without loss in the Italian invasion was the *SAMUEL CHASE*, commanded by Coast Guard Captain Roger C. HEIMER, of St. Louis, Missouri.

Fighting gallantly during repeated enemy bombing attacks, the vessel retired from the combat area without serious casualty. Three Axis bomber planes were shot down by the craft’s gun crews.

The *CHASE* was the **FIRST** American warship to take part in three invasions. Flagship of the 8th Amphibious Force, she was missed by a hail of bombs and seven tor-

pedoes during the landings in North Africa, and for that reason was nicknamed the "*LUCKY CHASE*." Her performances off the shores of Sicily were also noteworthy.

Heimer was the FIRST skipper to employ railside loading. The troops, by means of this technique, were loaded faster and were no longer required to descend laboriously down nets with full equipment into tossing boats. It was Heimer's idea.

AQUATIC AMBULANCE

The FIRST Army hospital ship to operate under the Hague Convention was the vessel *ACADIA*. A former liner, the craft shuttled between Africa and Italy during the Salerno invasion. Later, she ranged the Italian coasts, picking up many wounded from the beachheads in performing ambulance service.

Operated by the Transportation Corps of the Army Service Forces, she was skippered by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas B. PROTZMAN, of Englewood, New Jersey.

Often the floating hospital was caught almost between the crossfire of shore batteries and warships. Once, when a U. S. minesweeper was torpedoed, the *ACADIA* received 33 survivors rushed to it in small boats for a distance of five miles. The crewmen had been burned by blazing oil. Blood plasma saved all but two of the victims.

On her first trip to America from the war theater, the ship brought home 776 war casualties.

CORNUCOPIAN CELEBRATION

The horn of plenty was in evidence at the FIRST meeting of the American 5th Army and the British 8th advancing from the south of Italy. The cornucopian display was put on by delighted Italian inhabitants on a stretch of mountain road between Paestum and Capri. The civilians tossed apples, grapes, and walnuts to the passing soldiers.

The American patrol in the junction of the two armies was led by Lieutenant R. B. BALES, of Elk City, Oklahoma. He was met by a Sergeant Butler of County Kildare, Ireland, who voiced the "hello" for the British troops. The date was September 16.

Another junction of the British and U. S. forces occurred at Torre Annunziata, on September 29. Corporal Ralph BARR, of Evansville, Indiana, was the FIRST soldier to pass through the town when its occupation put the 5th Army on the straight road to Naples.

NAPLES NOTATIONS

Naples fell to the Allied troops at 8 A.M. on October 1. The conquest followed a week's fierce fighting in the surrounding hills. Most of the five German divisions which defended the city made a clean getaway.

Brigadier General Frank J. McSHERRY, of Eldorado Springs, Missouri, was the FIRST American officer to enter Naples. Previously, he had been deputy chief of the Allied Military Government in Sicily; here he became ruler, as personal representative of General Eisenhower.

The port of Naples was left completely wrecked by the enemy. Less than a year later it became the foremost Allied military port in the world.

Damage to railway facilities caused by air raids was so extensive that it took ten days to get any of the lines ready for operation. Major Arthur G. TEETS, of Bucyrus, Ohio, executive officer of an engineering unit, was in charge of the FIRST train trip out of Naples.

HAWAIIAN HEROES

The FIRST Americans of Japanese blood to see action in Europe had their baptism of fire on the Volturno River front. A unit of these troops, led by Captain Taro SUZUKI, a native of Honolulu, fought for four days near Benevento,

then entered the town and rescued 22 United States parachute troops who had been trapped behind Nazi lines for more than two weeks.

All of Suzuki's enlisted men were from Hawaii. The FIRST prisoner was captured by two sergeants, Edward KIOTA and Daniel WADA. The squad which rescued the paratroopers was led by Sergeant Yutaka NAZU.

VOLTURNO VICTORY

When Arnone was captured on October 7, military experts let it be known they expected the next German defense line would be set up on the banks of the Volturno River. This prediction was borne out two days later when the enemy took a stand during a fight in what developed into the "first round" in the battle for Rome. On October 19, Allied headquarters declared the Battle of the Volturno River had "ended in victory."

Lieutenant John BOYD, of Amarillo, Texas, led the FIRST platoon of troops to enter Arnone. Many hours after he had established an observation post in a building with a tower that dominated the town, the incoming Americans beat off a Nazi counterattack. Arnone fell the next day.

Captain Robert L. PETHERICK, of Port Orchard, Washington, designed the FIRST bridge to span the Volturno successfully while the battle was in progress. The engineering expert originally tried out his plans on a lagoon in the palace grounds at Naples before the war reached the river.

TOUGH TOWNS

Cassino was destined to be the stumbling block to the capture of Rome. The approaches to the former fortress town were less difficult, although costly to the Americans from a standpoint of casualties. The village of San Pietro, which was a key point leading into the Cassino plain, fell December 18 after a four-day battle.

Captain Charles BEACHAM, of San Antonio, Texas, led

the FIRST company to launch an attack. His men braved murderous enemy mortar fire in a dash across "Death Valley" to enter the place on a reconnoitering mission.

San Vittore was another tough town to crack. Hand-to-hand fighting for three days, beginning January 4, 1944, was the bitterest of the war in Italy up to that time. The Americans had won a decisive victory by January 8.

Captain Arthur STONE, of Chicago, Illinois, was commander of the FIRST field-artillery battery to win a commendation in his battalion as a result of his action around San Vittore. His guns destroyed the Pontecorvo Bridge.

Captain Benjamin J. BUTLER, of Milton, Kentucky, led the FIRST company to reach the top of Mt. Pantano. His men fought through heavy fire in a bayonet charge, then beat off five Nazi counterattacks in four days.

ANZIO AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT

A beachhead 32 miles south of Rome was established by the Allied invasion landing in the Nettuno-Anzio area on January 22, 1944. With our naval guns commanding the shore, there was little resistance from the Nazis, who evidently had been genuinely surprised. The town of Nettuno was quickly seized. The occupation forces of Americans, British, and Greeks of the 5th Army under General Mark Clark soon held a 30-mile front. The Allies lost three destroyers and a merchant ship.

Unfortunately, the landing failed to divert the Germans from Cassino or cut Nazi communications along the Appian Way. This meant a long and costly campaign to seize Rome.

The slowness of the over-all operation was partly due to the supply situation. The Allies had outside access only from the sea. The Nazis had the advantage of quicker transportation by land. A larger Allied invasion force would have enjoyed much better success, but the added punch was reputedly impossible to obtain at this stage of the war.

The amphibious landings and beachheadings in themselves were called "perfect." There were other favorable as-

pects. The Army advanced more than thirty miles toward Rome in the first four days. Five German divisions faced the threat of being bottled up in the Cassino sector.

Anzio, the home of Nero, held out until January 25, although partially under control at the outset of combat.

Captain Frederick SAAM, of Calumet, Illinois, was the FIRST member of the invading forces to enter Anzio.

PUGILISTIC PACESETTING

The FIRST American to reach shore in the beachhead landing was Private Walter P. KRZYSZTOFIK, of Summit, Illinois. A bodyguard for his captain, he waded in from his boat two minutes ahead of "V" hour.

This soldier was a former middleweight boxer, and he showed his good footwork by hurrying to a barbed-wire impediment put up by the enemy. Cutting the barrier, he enabled the first troops to swarm in Anzio.

During the Sicilian operation, Krzysztofik was blown into the sea, but he swam for thirty minutes until rescued by a friendly naval vessel.

He was reported missing in action in May, 1944.

The FIRST cemetery of the 5th Army on the Anzio beachhead was consecrated on January 28. Major Ralph SMITH, chaplain, of San Antonio, Texas, conducted the first services.

FABULOUS FOOTSY

One of the great heroes of the American drive inland from the Nettuno beachhead was Captain (then Lieutenant) Maurice L. (Footsy) BRITT, of Lonoke, Arkansas.

Leading a contingent of 55 men, he crossed the Mussolini Canal at Monte Rotondo, overlooking the town of Mignano, and teamed up with another unit in seizing two road junctions.

Using machine guns and grenades in resisting Nazi coun-

terattacks, his men advanced in an all-night battle (January 24-25) until they reached their objective. During the fighting, Britt, a former football star with the University of Arkansas and the Detroit Lions, found himself without a weapon. He grabbed a rifle from a badly wounded man and dashed into a wooded section, with eight doughboys following him.

This small force did battle with 100 Germans. Britt killed eleven of his adversaries, and his men knocked off sixteen others. His daring action during the many hours of conflict freed a number of previously captured Americans, saved his company from annihilation, and prevented the Nazis from cutting off an entire battalion of the 3d Division.

In the meantime Britt was wounded in the side, chest, face, and hands. He refused medical aid and continued fighting. In a one-man-army rampage, Footsy wiped out a machine gun.

Britt was so seriously wounded in a later action that it became necessary to amputate his right arm. For his gallant Rotundo deeds he was awarded the Medal of Honor. Footsy was the FIRST Army man to be awarded his country's three highest combat medals, including the Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star.

BELLIGERENT BAZOOKAMAN

The bazooka was once jestingly called "a \$19 rainpipe almost as good as a \$25,000 howitzer." Sergeant John J. ZYGMUNT, of Massachusetts and Manchester, New Hampshire, did everything he could to prove it. He was the FIRST bazookaman on record to knock out a Nazi Tiger tank. To show how much faith he had in the potency of his weapon, this sergeant also gave a display of daring belligerency by standing up to seven other Mark VIs. He fought until ordered to withdraw.

The action occurred in the Anzio area on February 18. From a distance of sixty yards, Zygmunt fired two armor-

piercing rockets. The big Tiger saw no more action that day. The crew of another of the eight enemy "iron war horses" fled when the sergeant continued firing. Smaller Nazi tanks had been knocked out before that; but never before had anybody had such luck against the tough armor plate of a Mark VI.

ANZIO AIR ACTIVITIES

Three phases of air activity were developed at the expense of the Nazis in the course of the first week and just prior to the Anzio-Nettuno invasion. To begin with, all the nearby airfields in the Rome area were knocked out of business during the 24 hours prior to D-day. That reduced the enemy's power to smash the amphibious forces. Then, when the beaches were stormed, the Allies put their air "umbrella" to work in assisting ground action and protecting the invaders.

Finally, five days later, the newly organized Mediterranean Allied Air Force added weight to the mounting bomber-plane attacks by staging its FIRST raid, under the command of Lieutenant General Ira C. EAKER, a native of Llano County, Texas. Besides raining destruction on the enemy ground forces, the Flying Fortresses and other aircraft shot down 25 Nazi planes in the single operation. Five months previously, Eaker had led the FIRST all-American air raid on France.

Major Robert WORLEY, of Riverside, California, led the FIRST mission of planes to cover the amphibious attack and landing at Nettuno.

Lieutenant James T. JOHNSON, of Wilmington, North Carolina, a Warhawk pilot, was the FIRST flyer to land on the Anzio beachhead. He did the "impossible" by coming down on small airstrips designed for tiny Cub planes, and he also took off safely, which was hailed as another unprecedented feat.

Another Warhawk pilot, Lieutenant William R. RAMS-

DELL, of Augusta, Kansas, was the FIRST American to be liberated as a result of the Anzio landings. He had been forced down in enemy territory and made a prisoner a few hours before the invasion was launched.

ACE AGAINST AXIS

Fighter planes under the direction of Colonel Charles M. McCORKLE, of Newton, North Carolina, specialized in patrolling the Anzio beachhead from D-day until April 1, and during that time shot down 54 Nazi aircraft. He was commander of the FIRST group of U. S. airmen to fly Spitfire planes.

McCorkle became an ace while flying over the Anzio area, on February 7. He bagged his 11th plane near Avignon, France, four months later, and previously scored personal victories over Austria, Romania, and Hungary.

Major Robert W. NEAL, of Muskegon, Michigan, led the FIRST Flying Fortress squadron to complete 200 missions in Italy, on January 23.

Captain George S. ROBERTS, of Fairmont, West Virginia, was commander of the FIRST squadron of Negro flyers to go into action on the Italian front. Some of their victories were over the Anzio beachhead.

BEACHHEAD BOMBINGS

Beachhead bombings by the enemy failed to discourage such American activities as the issuance of newspapers, the staging of baptismal rites, and the holding of naturalization ceremonies.

Three days after invasion landings, the FIRST newspaper to be established in the Anzio-Nettuno sector was circulated under the direction of Lieutenant Sumner WILSON, of New Rochelle, New York. The editor called it the *Beachhead Bugle*. Printed on a duplicating machine by Wilson, a 5th Army censor, the paper made comment in one of the

early issues about "praiseworthy American women nurses coming to the beachhead so soon and subjecting themselves to daily air raids and long-range shelling."

Not long afterwards, Anzio was the scene of the death of the FIRST American Red Cross nurse killed in the war. The victim was Lieutenant Esther RICHARDS, of San Francisco, California.

Then there was the time when 139 noncitizen soldiers appeared at a beachhead rendezvous to take their oaths in proceedings for naturalization. The program was carried out although two 500-pound bombs fell within 50 yards of the scene a few minutes before the men assembled.

It was the FIRST ceremony of its kind ever held under fire. A United States vice-consul performed the service. Private Francis MUIR, of Worcester, Massachusetts, was the FIRST trooper to be naturalized.

Private Leo D. FAGAN, of Picher, Oklahoma, was the FIRST beachhead American to be baptized in the Tyrrhenian Sea after the Allied landing at Anzio.

SIEGE, STALEMATE

The Nazis' "Green Devils," a parachute division, resisted all attempts to capture Cassino, from early in February until the middle of May. The stone-built town, which once had a population of 16,000, was elaborately fortified.

The FIRST fighting troops to reach the outskirts were directed by Major Warren CHAPMAN, of Nevada City, California. The date was February 2, ten days after the Anzio invasion. The troops were from a division which had fought its way north from Salerno.

Lieutenant Howard MICHAELS, of Linden, Indiana, commanded the FIRST tank to arrive at the edge of the town.

A patrol of fourteen men penetrated Cassino on January 25 but it was not until shortly after dawn on February 2 that the FIRST combat troops fought their way inside. They were under the leadership of Lieutenant John MURPHY,

of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and were forced to withdraw when greatly outnumbered, after bagging some prisoners.

One of the highlights of the long siege was the destruction of the ancient Mount Cassino monastery on February 15. The Nazis had converted the abbey into a fortress.

The event marked the first participation in combat of the 88th Division. One of its officers, Lieutenant Colonel Franklin P. MILLER, of Carmel, California, won the distinction of firing the division's FIRST shell, which crashed into the monastery. The 88th was the FIRST all-Selective Service division to go into the front lines in World War II, and was commanded by Major General John E. SLOAN, of Greenville, South Carolina and San Antonio, Texas.

CASSINO CATASTROPHE

Five hours of the heaviest aerial bombing ever concentrated in so small an area resulted in the destruction of what remained of the town of Cassino on March 15.

Lieutenant David J. TEARE, of Cleveland, Ohio, was pilot of the FIRST plane to reach the target, in his Mitchell bomber "Dorothy Ann II."

Lieutenant Robert J. LYNN, of Sacramento, California, was the bombardier, and hit his target "on the button" with his 1000-pounders, making a big dent in the southern end of the city, where the Nazis had been dug in for several weeks.

The bomb deluge continued for five hours, with about 550 heavy planes participating. Less than half of the expenditure of 3,500 tons struck Cassino proper. The rest fell on enemy gunners in trenches and foxholes in the surrounding hills. Seventy thousand rounds of artillery were also poured on the city.

Unexpectedly, the Nazi garrison was not wiped out. The "Green Devils" emerged from the "rubble" to resume their determined resistance.

Bad weather hampered Allied ground fighting and any effective aerial follow-up.

Cassino was not completely subjugated and rid of the

last enemy soldiers until May 18. Then, for the first time, the Allies found themselves astride two highways leading to Rome.

NOCTURNAL NIMBLENESS

The most eye-straining job of aerial warfare was experienced by night fighter pilots. Flying invariably in darkness, they had to get close enough to the enemy to be certain about the type of plane they were attacking. To fire into a friendly aircraft meant court-martial summons.

Off Italy, in January, 1944, Lieutenant Charles F. HORNE, of Atlanta, Georgia, became the FIRST night fighter pilot to shoot down a big German Heinkel 177 plane. He hovered for seven minutes at a distance of only 100 feet before blowing up the bomber, because he had wanted to make sure of the identity of the aircraft. A nimble getaway saved him from being "hoist by his own petard."

Horne's commander was Major Gorden D. TIMMONS, of Olney, Texas, who was skipper of the FIRST United States squadron of night fighters to serve in the Mediterranean theater. His force flew more missions than any other similar American outfit.

Lieutenant Michael T. RUSSO, of Cleveland, Ohio, while flying over central Italy, became the FIRST pilot of an A-36 Invader plane to attain "ace" ranking when he bagged two Messerschmitts.

SHIP-SINKING SPECIALIST

Known as "The Tunnel Buster" because of his frequent attacks on enemy railroad facilities while flying Warhawks and Thunderbolts, Major Charles C. LEAF, of South Orange, New Jersey, also specialized in sinking ships. He was commander of the FIRST U. S. squadron in the Italian theater to fly 1,000 missions.

Leaf's "Double-Trouble Boys" hewed a path of destruction around the Yugoslavian coast early in 1944. The skipper

personally blasted a half-dozen Nazi vessels in January and February. He had previously flown with the RAF in Egypt before joining the 57th Fighter Group, being awarded the British DFC for his joint leadership in pummeling vital targets in Yugoslavia.

Brigadier General Laurence C. CRAIGIE, of Stoneham, Massachusetts, commander of a coastal airforce fighter wing in the Italian theater, was the FIRST military pilot to operate the Allies' jet-propelled plane.

HOPPING HANDYMEN

"Grasshopper" or Piper Cub plane pilots were literally the handymen of aerial operations during the Italian campaign.

Captain William H. McKAY, of Arp and Dallas, Texas, a squadron commander, pioneered in the FIRST missions of the tiny observation craft in dropping water, food, and supplies for troops high in the mountains.

One of his outstanding performances as an ace "spotter" for the 45th Division occurred when he located more than 2,000 German infantry pouring down a road. He called the position so accurately that artillerymen were able to wipe out hundreds of the enemy before they could take to cover, more than 1,000 casualties being inflicted.

Another who did much hopping around "off the beaten paths" was Lieutenant James FISH, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, commander of the "Screwball Escadrille" force of Cub craft. He employed "flying jeeps" for the FIRST time as fighter-bombers when his pilots dropped twenty cans of gasoline and oil on Nazi entrenchments, also igniting the fuel in the same operation from an altitude of 1,500 feet, in Italy, on April 22, 1944.

SPRING STAMPEDE

The Allied spring offensive was launched May 11. General Clark of the 5th Army announced: "We are going to de-

stroy the German armies in Italy." The attack was also the beginning of the Gustav Line Battle, as well as part of the campaign to capture Rome.

Santa Maria Infante was taken by American forces three days later. The town was described as the key to the entire enemy 25-mile defensive front. Fighting was in progress all the way between Cassino and the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Major Charles P. FURR, of Rock Hill, South Carolina, led the FIRST troops to enter Santa Maria Infante. Although the town was a natural fortress, there was little fighting in the occupation. However, the battle in the approaches, lasting six days, was bitter and costly.

Furr was killed in action on October 1. Prior to that, the battalion which he commanded captured Laiatico, key to the German defense line before Arno, in a four-day battle, early in July.

HOT HEELS

Fifth Army doughboys continued hot on the Nazis' heels as they advanced past Scauri, which was captured May 16, two days before the fall of Cassino. Major Andrew R. CHEEK, of Stockdale, Texas, commanded the FIRST tank to penetrate the Tyrrhenian port town. Although enemy shells were falling about them, the Americans proceeded up the main street of Scauri and destroyed three Nazi anti-tank guns.

An advance of seven miles was recorded on May 20, when a battalion led by Lieutenant Colonel Walter B. YEAGER, of Macon, Georgia, captured Fondi, killing all but three of the German defenders. The Georgian was the FIRST American to enter the city, pacing a party of infantrymen who were flanking enemy machine-gun positions.

BEACHHEAD BREAKTHROUGH

The long-awaited breakthrough from the Anzio area toward Rome occurred on May 23. Sergeant Ralph JOHNSON,

of Louisville, Kentucky, was commander of the FIRST tank to surge across the Cisterna-Rome railroad in the operation which cracked the German beachhead line. He returned from his foray with thirteen prisoners.

General Clark was personally in charge of the Allied attacks touching off a great battle which was destined to have an important bearing on the drive to the gates of Rome. The troops had spent 122 days on the beachhead.

JUBILANT JUNCTION

The merging of two fronts in Italy was accomplished seven miles below Anzio in the Pontine Marshes, on May 25, after two weeks of a whirlwind offensive. Contact was established between the main 5th Army and the beachhead forces.

Shaking hands in the FIRST meeting near Borgo Grappa were the leaders of the two participating patrols—Lieutenant Francis X. BUCKLEY, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Captain Benjamin H. SOUSA, of Honolulu, the latter representing the Anzio troops. Buckley's men—engineers—had covered thirty miles from the southern front to make the junction, and the soldiers in their armored cars were pelted with roses by jubilant Italians.

HIGHWAY OF HORROR

Long-range Nazi guns at Cori battered the Anzio beachhead for four months, but they were silent on May 25, when the place was occupied. Lieutenant Colonel Lionel C. McGARR, of Phoenix, Arizona, directed the FIRST troops to enter the mountain stronghold.

Leading up to the smashed stone walls of the battered town was the "highway of horror." The bodies of many German soldiers which littered the traffic artery were passed by the troops. There was also wreckage everywhere of abandoned enemy equipment.

McGarr, on the previous day, led a drive erasing the

Nazis' Ponte Rotto defenses, near Cisterna, and captured a pair of the enemy's 88-mm. guns.

VALMONTONE VICTORY

Valmontone's capture, on June 2, cut off the escape route of the Nazi 10th Army fleeing from the south. The victory there of the Anzio invasion forces also gave Allies a clear path to Rome, only twenty miles away.

The battle outside the town with the Germans' Goering Division had lasted for a full week. Lieutenant Frank W. CONNOR, Jr., of Silver Springs, Maryland, led his famed beachhead reconnaissance patrol the "Snoop Troop," in the FIRST entry into Valmontone.

Sergeant John SAMPLES, of Johnson City, Illinois, gave the FIRST notice to civilians of the liberation event, by ringing a church bell.

MOMENTOUS MEETING

When Warrant Officer George MITRA, of Ridley Park, Pennsylvania, went on a personal reconnaissance on the morning of June 3, he had no idea he would soon be shaking hands with a British general. He not only did that, but was heralded as the FIRST man in the 5th Army to make contact with leading elements of the English 8th Army.

The British had been surging north steadily from the direction of Cassino which they had captured seventeen days previously. The convergence of the two armies occurred on famous Highway 6, ten miles east of Valmontone. Mitra, an artilleryman attached to French units of the 5th, experienced "the surprise of his life" when he literally "bumped into" friendly forces of another nation while out in his jeep looking for a transport.

Of the more than thirty members of the 3d (Rock of the Marne) Division to be awarded the Medal of Honor, two privates who died to save their patrol from ambush became the FIRST dual winners of the decoration.

The "unsurpassed joint heroism" of the pair—Privates Herbert F. CHRISTIAN, of Steubenville, Ohio, and Eldon JOHNSON, of East Weymouth, Massachusetts—was acclaimed as a major factor in getting their battalion across Highway 6 to strike at the Nazi forces trying to escape from southern Italy.

The two doughboys initiated their heroic performance by ordering the deputy patrol leader to conduct the remainder of the men to safety. After an enemy slug severed his right leg above the knee, Christian advanced on his left knee and his bloody right stump; killed three Germans with a tommy gun; staggered into a position ten yards from the enemy; and managed to reload his weapon and empty it into the opposing force before he collapsed and died.

Meanwhile, Johnson walked steadily toward the Nazi line with an automatic rifle, diverting fire to himself to protect others in the patrol. At five paces from a machine-gun nest, he fired a long burst, killing four Jerries. Enemy bullets struck him and he went to his knees. From that position the brave New Englander emptied his weapon before reeling over dead.

The patrol emerged without other losses and sounded an alarm that brought a larger force which wiped out the hostile attackers. The engagement was near Valmontone, early in June. The ceremony honoring the men posthumously was one of the rare occasions in history in which the decoration was awarded to more than one person for the same action.

ROME RESTITUTION

Rome was the first enemy-held capital on the continent of Europe to fall to the Allies. The historic city was occupied

on June 4, 1944. The Nazis had been in possession since the previous September 10, as a result of the first foreign invasion there since Napoleon's seizure in 1797.

Liberation of the Eternal City was accomplished without much bloodshed. The enemy made a final stand at the gates, but Clark's 5th Army crashed inside handily for a mop-up of scattered remnants.

The FIRST unit of American troops to enter Rome were "Quigley's Kraut Killers," a mechanized cavalry outfit, known officially as the 88th Division Reconnaissance Troop, led by Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) Hugh E. QUIGLEY, of Nutley, New Jersey. During the early spring, this force maintained contact with the enemy for 37 consecutive days, in positions so advanced the men could "practically look down the Germans' throats."

The FIRST tanks in line when the armored spearheaders started their onrush to Rome were led by Lieutenant Colonel Bogardus CAIRNS, of Decatur, Georgia.

Lieutenant Leroy J. HART, of St. Mary's, Missouri, platoon commander, led the FIRST convoy of American trucks into Rome.

FRENZIED FLIGHT

The Nazis fled north and eventually established themselves on the Gothic Line, more than 150 miles beyond Rome. The 5th Army reached the extended enemy front in slightly more than three months, taking many towns on and near the west coast.

Advancing at the rate of fifteen miles a day up to June 10, with the untrapped German army still ahead of them, the Americans tarried to capture Viterbo on the 9th.

Corporal Carl WIRTHWEIN, of Evansville, Indiana, was skipper of the FIRST tank (No. 13) to enter that medieval town, which had been crushed by bombings from the air in the previous March.

An unusual circumstance in the drive northward was the arrival at Piombino, with a population of 30,000, where there

were no Germans to oppose occupation. Here an American battalion commander failed to adhere to the schedule. He functioned ahead of time, but it turned out okay. That was when Lieutenant Colonel John C. MONNING, of Los Angeles, California, led a party of four engineers in the FIRST entry into the seaport and took possession 24 hours in advance of the time officially designated for the capture of the city, on June 26.

Major Harry McSWEEN, a South Carolinian, commanded the FIRST troops into Rosignano, key town in the outer defense belt before Livorno (Leghorn). There was bitter fighting for three days before the capitulation, on July 7.

LIVORNO LIBERATION

A valuable supply base was won in the American capture of Livorno, third largest seaport in Italy, on July 19. The Nazis pulled out of the hills overlooking the city the night before, after fighting desperately for a number of days.

Tanks led the way into Livorno. The FIRST one to enter was commanded by Captain Ryle K. ROBINSON, of Detroit, Michigan.

The Nazis offered only scattered opposition. About one-third of the buildings had been smashed by Allied bombs and German demolitions, and for that reason the citizens did not display too much enthusiasm in greeting their liberators.

PISA PENETRATION

Pisa, the ancient city famed for its leaning tower, served as the western anchor of the Nazi Gothic Line. When captured on September 2, it became a key point in the Allied Front in northern Italy, as well as a factor in the Arno River campaign.

The FIRST penetration of Pisa was accomplished several weeks before the campaign was carried into the immediate

area. The daring venture was the work of a 22-man Japanese-American patrol, led by Lieutenant Arthur M. BOYD, of Bartlesville, Oklahoma. In a perilous journey, the scouts slipped through enemy lines and obtained valuable information for the Allies before their return. They covered many miles on their secret march.

Colonel R. W. BROEDLOW, of Medford, Oregon, commanded the FIRST regiment to reach the Arno River. Previously, his force captured Albano Hills, making possible the fall of Rome.

The FIRST Negro to win the Legion of Merit, the fourth highest Army decoration, was Sergeant Jerry B. DAVIS, of Macon, Georgia. He was wounded while carrying rations to his gun crews during a heavy Nazi barrage in the Battle of the Arno River. A general pinned the medal on his blouse while he was recuperating in a hospital.

DAZZLING DOUGHBOY

Serving as a "one-man beachhead," Sergeant (then Private) Oscar G. JOHNSON, Jr., of Foster City, Michigan, held off continuous attacks by five Nazi paratroop companies for two days and nights, near Scarperia.

The breakthrough of the enemy Gothic Line was then in progress, and this doughboy was the leading actor in his company's victory. As a result of his achievements, Johnson became the FIRST man in the 91st Division to win the Medal of Honor.

Leader of seven men, his mortar squad was assigned to act as the company's "toehold" in protecting the left flank while Nazi pillbox defenses were being attacked on Montecelli Ridge. His small force was soon *hors de combat*, with some killed and all the others wounded. The outlook grew worse when the ammunition ran out.

Undaunted, Johnson obtained two rifles, hid on an overhanging ledge, and picked off eight of the enemy in a pillbox. He later accounted for twelve more who had been

pinning down American units with hand grenades. On the following day, 25 Germans surrendered to him.

In addition, Johnson had silenced three enemy machine guns. He was officially credited with killing twenty Jerries, but there was evidence that the figure was an understatement. Within 150 yards of the dazzling doughboy's position, the ground was strewn with 200 enemy dead, and Johnson's buddies said he had killed most of them.

MOUNTAIN MOP-UP

Jerry machine guns stationed in the doorways of stone houses in Poggia village were playing havoc with his company of infantrymen, so Lieutenant Orville E. BLOCK, of Streeter, North Dakota, decided to do something about it. A platoon leader, he obtained three volunteers, and they climbed a 2300-foot height on which the enemy was entrenched while pot-shotting the Americans.

Leaving his men behind, Block burst into one house after another. Some of the formidable guns he kicked over, then captured the crews. Others he polished off with hand grenades.

Like a man berserk, he continued his rampage in the entirely hostile community until he "wiped out a mountain-top-ful" of the enemy, altogether knocking out five machine-gun nests, killing six Nazi soldiers, capturing nineteen and wounding six more. He was the FIRST living member of the 85th Division to win the Medal of Honor.

FUTILE FORTIFICATIONS

General Clark proclaimed on September 25, "In nine days the 5th Army has destroyed the Gothic Line which it took the Germans nine months to build."

The feat was accomplished by the 91st (Powder River) Division, commanded by Major General William G. LIVE-SAY, of Columbia, Missouri, and a native of Benton, Illinois.

The futile and elaborate series of fortifications, abounding in concrete emplacements and containing miles of barbed wire and scores of pillboxes, were cracked when the troops captured Futa Pass.

The 91st entered combat for the first time as a complete fighting unit in the battle for the port of Livorno (Leghorn), and was the FIRST to reach the Arno River and the FIRST to enter Pisa when that city was captured.

Livesay's forces also took Mount Adone, commanding the Po Valley, which accomplishment was made possible by the breakthrough of the Gothic Line, and later helped in the seizure of Bologna.

The six-foot Missouri general had entered the Army as a private in 1915.

The FIRST shells to be poured into enemy positions in the Po Valley were fired by the 698th Field Artillery Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Chester V. CLIFTON, of Sumner, Washington. One of the pioneers in the battle use of the new 240-mm. howitzers, he blasted a German gun miles away and out of sight, behind the hills. Moving over to Germany, he exploded shells in Karlsruhe, causing a run on the banks in that city, December 18, 1944.

APENNINES ACHIEVEMENT

The sealing of a treacherous five-mile-long, 3500-foot ridge in the Apennines was something to write home about, but that feat was not much more than a picnic for Lieutenant Colonel Henry HAMPTON, of Oakland, California, compared with his experiences once he reached the summit. There he and his men stood off Nazi forces in a bitterly fought battle lasting thirty hours.

Colonel Hampton was leader of a battalion which, in this operation, conducted the FIRST offensive staged by the 10th Mountain Infantry Division. In winning their objective—a crest overlooking a vital enemy highway, southwest of Bologna, Italy—the Americans had to overcome vigorous German mortar fire and dense minefields. They reached the

top by using fixed ropes and other specialized Alpine cliff-climbing gear, and then they outfought the foe with the support of friendly artillery fire and rocket-firing fighter planes roaring over enemy positions every half-hour.

The successful engagement by these specially trained troops on Monte Belvedere occurred on February 18-19, 1945.

ENTERPRISING ENTERPRISIAN

The enterprise of Captain Gayle STOCKDALE, of Enterprise, Oregon, was something to behold. He was skipper of a lone American tank which chased the last Nazi self-propelled gun from the highway bridge guarding the entrance to Bologna, opening the way for the victorious entrance into that ancient gateway to the Po Valley.

Furthermore, the Enterprisian commanded the FIRST tank to go into that great fortress city, which fell to the Allies on April 21, 1945.

Lieutenant Colonel Bruno MARCHI, of Ft. Dodge and Newton, Iowa, was commander of the FIRST battalion marching into Bologna. He rode on Stockdale's tank.

A six-day siege by American and British troops preceded the collapse of the ring of German defenses around the city. Official credit went to Italian brigades for the liberation. Bologna had stood as a defiant Nazi symbol of resistance throughout the winter's bitter fighting.

The Germans surrendered in Italy on May 2, four days after the execution of Mussolini.

WOUNDED WOMEN—WACS—WAR WEDDINGS

The FIRST American woman of the war to win two decorations was an Army nurse—Lieutenant Cordelia E. COOK, of Ft. Thomas, Kentucky. She received the Purple Heart when wounded in the bombing of her field hospital in the Presenzano sector and the Bronze Star for covering herself with glory during other fighting in Italy.

Two sisters, Lieutenants Madonna and Agnes NOLAN, of Oakland, Illinois, were the FIRST Army nurses to be awarded the Purple Heart, having been injured when their hospital ship was struck by German bombers outside the Gulf of Salerno, September 13, 1943.

Lieutenant Mary L. ROBERTS, of Dallas, Texas, was the ranking officer among three nurses who were the FIRST women ever given the Silver Star. They were decorated for "coolness and efficiency" when they carried on while others were being killed and wounded during the shelling of a hospital area on the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead.

Private Lora O. HOWIESON, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was the FIRST Wac to put foot on the continent of Europe, arriving in Italy November 17, 1943.

The FIRST Wac to wed in Italy was Corporal Mary Jo MARLIN, of Wheeling, West Virginia. She became the bride of a soldier. Sergeant Marian SLEWITZKE, of Mosinee, Wisconsin, was the FIRST Wac married at the front.

Lieutenant Genevieve CLARKE, of Allison Park, Pennsylvania, a nurse, was the bride at the FIRST beachhead wedding of the war, at Anzio. Lieutenant Thomas G. ROSE, of Lancaster, Ohio, was the groom in this ceremony.

CHAPTER 4

FIRST CLASH WITH AXIS: IN ATLANTIC

America's first warfare with the Axis was staged in the Atlantic.

Arrayed on one side of the gigantic struggle was our ocean fleet under the command of Admiral Jonas H. Ingram, whose goal was to keep the shipping lanes open.

Opposing were Germany's snarling packs of hundreds of roving submarines, preying on cargo ships carrying needed supplies and munitions of war from the United States.

Even before hostilities were declared, merchant vessels

loaded with lend-lease material were being attacked unceasingly and sometimes sunk off the coasts of the Americas by the undersea raiders.

The situation became desperate. Aside from defensive action of attacked ships and convoys, only shore-based air patrol was available to combat the menace at the outset. Flying boats and blimps, and later faster and heavier planes, were used. This served only to drive the U-boats away from our coast line. The enemy still had a wide expanse of ocean for safe hunting ground, beyond the range of land-based aircraft.

The answer was the escort aircraft carrier. The number of ship losses declined significantly by 1943, after the warfare was carried to the Mid-Atlantic.

Convoys crossing the ocean found cruising gradually safer as the war advanced. Over a period of 42 months, only 15 ships were lost in convoy out of a total of 16,760 escorted across. More than 3,500 war vessels were used in the protective program. About 50,000,000 miles of cruising was accomplished by the Atlantic fleet and the ships in convoy.

The U-boats sank a total of approximately 2,800 vessels.

The Allies, in turn, destroyed more than 725 of the German submarines. Figures released in June, 1945, showed the British disposed of 462 of the undersea craft, and the United States close to 150. One hundred more were destroyed by mines and other causes.

Navy planes and the Army's 1st Bomber Command formed the first patrols off the United States eastern coast. The Anti-Submarine Command went into action October 15, 1942, and in ten months attacked 52 submarines, hitting their targets in most cases. The organization, commanded by Major General Westside T. LARSON, of Vernalis and Vallejo, California, was the FIRST unit of the AAF within the continental United States to have a major operational mission.

The FIRST reported sinkings of U-boats were made by the following pilots: Lieutenant Channing B. EMBERSON, of Oakland, California; Ensign William TEPUNI, of San

Francisco, California; Ensign Donald F. MASON, of Rochester, Minnesota; Lieutenant Lowell DAVIS, of Vina, Alabama; Captain Morris FITZGERALD, of Ft. Smith, Arkansas; and Lieutenant Elmer H. EPPERSON, of Scott City, Kansas.

It was Ensign Mason who sent the famous message: "Sighted sub, sank same."

NAZI NEMESIS

Pioneer of all the "flat-tops" which terrorized the U-boats was the *RANGER*, the FIRST U. S. ship ever built specifically as an aircraft carrier. She spearheaded task forces which sank many of the enemy undersea craft.

One of the *RANGER*'S eight skippers was Vice Admiral Patrick N. L. BELLINGER, of Earlehurst, Virginia, and a native of Cheraw, South Carolina. Assuming leadership of all Navy aircraft in the Atlantic, he soon built a reputation as the nemesis of Hitler's pet naval wolves.

The Navy's second oldest airman in point of service, Bellinger was senior officer of the naval air station at Pearl Harbor when the war broke out. He was commander of the seaplane NC-1 on the Navy's FIRST trans-Atlantic flight, from Newfoundland to Azores, in 1919.

The *RANGER*'S career was not all confined to antisubmarine warfare. Her most telling single blow was during the North African invasion when her planes crippled the French battleship *JEAN BART*, silencing the latter's guns and, in addition, clearing the way for the Casablanca landing.

While under the skipper'ship of Captain Gordon ROWE, of Seattle, Washington, the *RANGER* made her most spectacular raid in enemy waters off Norway, sinking four Nazi merchant ships and a tanker.

Vice Admiral Arthur L. BRISTOL, Jr., of Charleston, South Carolina, another former commander of the *RANGER*, led a Navy task force which escorted sixty convoys of 2,400 merchant vessels across the North Atlantic in 1941 and 1942,

with a loss of only eight Allied ships. He was the **FIRST** admiral to die in the Atlantic service during the war. His death was from natural causes.

CHAMPION CVE CARD

The exploits of baby aircraft carriers created a sensation in the Battle of the Atlantic, in 1943.

Leading the list in thrilling combat with the U-boats was the flattop *CARD*. Flagship of a valiant task force, this CVE gained wide renown as a ship always ready to "wade into the midst of a pack of submarines and fight it out at close quarters."

The *CARD* and her escorts, including other baby carriers and destroyers, were under the command of Captain Arnold J. ISBELL, of Chicago, Illinois. When enemy undersea craft started to fight back against air attack in September, this skipper began a series of cruises which resulted in the issuance of a Presidential citation "for the destruction of more submarines than any team in naval history"—an honor bestowed on an aircraft carrier for the **FIRST** time.

By "wading in," the *CARD'S* planes and ships disposed of twelve U-boats.

Early in the war Isbell, piloting a Navy plane, was decorated for his skill in evading a hurricane and effecting a landing in Newfoundland while carrying out a survey of bases there. But he did not survive the war. His championship career abruptly ended when he was killed in action, on March 19, 1945.

SUBMARINE SEIZURE

Notable, too, was the feat of the baby carrier *GUADALCANAL*. The skipper, Captain Daniel V. GALLERY, of Chicago, Illinois and Vienna, Virginia, "hunted, attacked, boarded and captured intact the Nazi submarine U-505," off the French West African coast, on June 4, 1944, marking the

FIRST time since the War of 1812 that a foreign enemy warship had been captured by the American Navy on the high seas.

Teaming up with the *GUADALCANAL* in this accomplishment was a destroyer escort of the task force. The carrier's planes spotted the undersea craft from the air and guided other ships to the scene. The U-boat was towed 2,500 miles to the Bermuda operating base.

The FIRST United States carrier to be lost in the Atlantic as a result of enemy action was the *BLOCK ISLAND*, skippered by Captain Francis M. HUGHES, of Selma, Alabama and Charlottesville, Virginia. The sinking of the baby flat-top occurred May 29, 1944, and the U-boat responsible for the tragedy was itself sunk by another American warship in the convoy. The casualties were light. Hughes survived and was later put in command of the new carrier *BLOCK ISLAND*.

LANDSLIDE LUNGE

A "landslide lunge" out of the clouds at an angle of 60 degrees and an unprescribed speed of 245 miles an hour paid rich dividends for Ensign Thurmond E. ROBERTSON, of Spartanburg, South Carolina. He released his depth bomb so successfully that another flyer, teaming up with him, was able to complete the feat of sinking a U-boat in the South Atlantic, in April, 1943.

It was the FIRST time an antisubmarine pilot had ever dive-bombed with a PBY Catalina flying boat in making an attack.

A surfaced enemy submarine was headed pell-mell in the direction of an Allied convoy on another April day in the Pacific. Observing this was a pilot, Lieutenant Thomas KINASZCUK, of Elizabeth, New Jersey. He determined the undersea craft would never make contact with its objective. It didn't. The flyer's plane was struck by antiaircraft fire, but he never slackened his pace. The enemy was destroyed after a short battle.

Kinaszucuk won the distinction of being the FIRST pilot

of a Vega Ventura Navy bomber to participate in the sinking of a U-boat.

ROCKETS REMOVE RAIDER

The crew of a Nazi submarine was sent to eternity in the FIRST death-dealing use of rockets by Navy bombing planes. The new-type projectiles, developed for combat in the early part of 1944, made short shrift of the enemy raider, the fatal onslaught being staged by the pilots of two Gruman Avenger planes—Lieutenants Leonard L. McFORD, of Baltimore, Maryland, and Willis D. SEELEY, of Huntington, Indiana.

The flyers, attached to an escort carrier, roared down finally with depth bombs, and each scored direct hits on their target, which soon caused the U-boat to disappear, stern first, mortally wounded.

Lieutenant Omer J. DONAHOE, of Superior, Wisconsin, spearheaded another attack which resulted in the extinction of two, and possibly three, Axis submarines. Pilot of a baby carrier Wildcat fighter plane, he was the FIRST to strike when the American task force fought a pack of subs which assailed a Mediterranean-bound convoy.

Donahoe's bombs caused one of the enemy submersives to disappear, and it was listed as "possibly sunk." In the meantime other planes disposed of two other raiders "without a doubt."

ATLANTIC AMBUSHERS

The grim game of ambushing marauding German submarines was not confined to alert airplanes and voracious warships. Not to be overlooked was the Coast Guard "navy." Operating under the U. S. Treasury Department in peacetime, this organization fanned out in every direction in the Atlantic as a part of the regular naval fleet after the outbreak of war.

The astonishing performance of the "sassy" Coast Guard

cutters was something the U-boat commanders were hardly looking for. The Jerries paid dearly for their scorn for these efficient little craft in numerous encounters.

On one occasion, early in 1943, an enemy submarine cruised defiantly near the Carolina coast. The cutter *ICARUS* was on patrol in the same waters. The U-boat was sighted, dead ahead, and about 100 yards distant. The American crew ran to battle stations, and a terrific fight raged for thirty minutes, during which a Nazi torpedo streaked at the American vessel but missed its mark.

After a pattern of depth charges smote the enemy and forced the submarine to surface, with her bow pointing skyward at a 45-degree angle, a last attempt was made to save the raider. Nazi gun crews fired desperately until their vessel started sinking, and then took to the water.

Lieutenant Commander Maurice D. JESTER, Sr., of New Dorp, Staten Island, New York, commander of the *ICARUS*, took 33 enemy crewmen with him to port. The captives had been rescued from the ocean after the battle. Cited for his accomplishment, he became the FIRST Coast Guard officer to receive the Navy Cross in World War II.

Among other victorious cutters was the 327-foot *SPENCER*. Like the *ICARUS*, she delivered a deathblow to a lurking undersea craft (April, 1943) and brought a bag of prisoners back to port—40 disconsolate crewmen whose ship had fallen victim to an overdose of ashcans and gunfire.

Soundman Harold V. ANDERSON, of Kewanee, Illinois, was the FIRST man to give alarm of the approach of the enemy. His alertness paid dividends. The commander flashed word to other ships in his convoy: "Scratch one hearse! Pallbearers in the water!"

SUBMARINE SWAN SONG

One day elapsed after the official capitulation of Germany before the FIRST Nazi submarine surrendered. The capture was effected by a Navy Liberator plane captained

by Lieutenant Frederick L. SCHAUM, Jr., of Montgomery, Alabama. The aircraft was on patrol duty when it sighted the U-249 displaying the black surrender flag near the Scilly Islands, off Cornwall, England. Captain Schaum and his crew stood by until Royal Navy escort ships were sent to conduct the undersea craft to Portland for the final capitulation.

Commander F. S. HALL, of Fredonia, New York, skipper of a destroyer, accepted the surrender of the FIRST Nazi submersive—or any other type of German warship—to give up in American waters. The yielding undersea craft (U-858) claimed the sinking of sixteen Allied ships in two and one-half years of operation. The capture occurred 300 miles south of Cape Race, Newfoundland, one day after her sister ship, the U-249, had surrendered off England to the United States bomber captain.

Custody of the U-boat was taken by Commander J. P. NORFLEET, of Bertie County, North Carolina, in formal ceremonies off Cape May, New Jersey.

GREENLAND GUARDIANSHIP

When Denmark fell to the Germans one of the Copenhagen government's possessions—Greenland—became an orphan among the remote outposts of the war-torn world. The shackles of Naziism were never imposed on the islanders, because the United States got there first.

America was not at that time at war with Hitler but wanted a foothold in Greenland for two reasons: (1) it protruded in the path of the shortest possible route to northern Europe and was a vastly strategic location for aviation fields; (2) the island was an ideal "barometer" for weather on the continent.

The Danish legation in Washington did not want domination by Germany, but the obliging envoys were decidedly agreeable, giving us the privilege of welcome guardianship.

So the FIRST Army Air Force base was established on

the island, early in 1941, under the direction of Colonel Bernt BALCHEN, of Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, with the consent of the emissaries hostile to Hitler.

ENEMY EXPELLED

Also installed was the FIRST Army sledge patrol in Greenland, under the direction of Rear Admiral Ed H. SMITH, of Winchester, Massachusetts. Known as "Iceberg," the Coast Guard officer later became commander of the island's entire naval patrol.

Early in 1943, the discovery was made that the Nazis had secretly invaded the island with a small force and had established a radio and weather station in the frozen arctic wasteland. In addition, it was soon learned the enemy's aircraft had been patrolling methodically thereabouts and that their submarines had been refueling in the island's fjords.

Contact with the Germans was made by one of Smith's patrols. A sledman was slain by a hostile trooper. It was the FIRST combat incident in ground warfare to occur in the Western Hemisphere.

That was the beginning of "unpublicized war" in Greenland. The conflict between the small contesting forces was a stalemate for several weeks until flyers under Colonel Balchen bombed the secret base in May.

Then the FIRST combat expedition to be organized during the war in the Western Hemisphere made a tortuous journey to the hidden weather base and completed its destruction, along with the radio station. The task force performing the mission was under the command of Captain Carl C. VON PAULSEN, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, Coast Guard admiral of the Greenland Patrol. The expedition was made up of Army ranger-type troops and specially trained Coast Guard landing forces.

ARCTIC AIR ADVENTURES

Colonel Balchen had other adventurous roles in the Arctic besides helping to wipe out the German invaders. Referred to by some authorities as "the greatest pilot in the world," he had previously gained fame by flying Admiral Byrd's plane over the North Pole and to the Antarctic. A native of Norway, he had been listed as Hitler's No. 1 enemy at Oslo before moving to America. During the last year of the war the colonel landed eight U. S. planes with forty crewmen near Bodoe, and they were the FIRST Allied soldiers to arrive in Norway above the Arctic Circle.

In Greenland Balchen also was the guiding spirit in the rescue of five stranded airmen from the island's famous ice-cap after five months of persistent attempts, during which five of his men died. He accomplished his mission by taking off on the snow and making three final trips to get the trapped men away by air. Earlier he had led a sensational expedition by saving the lives of fifteen flyers in the same general location.

Lieutenant John A. PRITCHARD, Jr., of Burbank, California, a Coast Guard flyer, was the FIRST airman to land on the Greenland icecap and take off again. He did this in rescuing two air crewmen during the same Balchen life-saving mission. He was himself killed when he made his second trip to the scene to save others still marooned there.

ICELAND INCUMBENCY

America's FIRST occupation of foreign soil during World War II was consummated before Pearl Harbor. The 6th Division of Marines, led by Brigadier General (then Colonel) Leo D. HERMLE, of Coronado, California and Hastings, Nebraska, landed in Iceland on July 7, 1941.

The event was in no sense of the word an act of belligerency. International repercussions did not ensue because the transaction was confined to diplomatic channels.

British forces, which had occupied the island the year

before, wanted to move out. Iceland wanted to continue safe communications with the United States and invited our forces to move in. The deal was closed and the Leathernecks landed.

Iceland's parliament (the Althing) canceled her union with Denmark when that country was seized by the Nazis, and declared her independence in May, 1941.

Hermle later commanded the 2nd Marines in their capture of Abemama Islet, in Tarawa Atoll, the Gilberts.

AIRACOBRA ANIMOSITY

The Icelandic area was the scene of the destruction of the FIRST Nazi plane by American aircraft in World War II. The feat was credited to Captain Joe SHAFFER, of Long Beach, California. He bagged the enemy, a Focke-Wulfe Kurier bomber, while on a patrol flight, on August 14, 1942.

Uncertain at first of the nationality of the other ship, Shaffer reported he drew closer until the German flyer started pouring tracers at him. Return fire from the captain's P-39 Airacobra set his antagonist's engine afire. The hostile plane plunged into the ocean.

The FIRST P-38 Lightning victory of the war was also attained near Iceland. The pilot was Lieutenant Elsa E. SHAHAN, of St. George, West Virginia. He was a member of the oldest fighter group in the Army, which flew to Iceland and England in the FIRST mass movement of pursuit planes across the ocean. His associates, in their first thousand missions in combat against the Axis, destroyed more than 300 enemy planes.

ASCENSION AIRWAY

Little Ascension Island, in the South Atlantic, became one of America's biggest assets in the prosecution of air warfare against the Axis powers. On this dot of British-owned land, with an area of only 38 square miles, a key air base was set up in the spring of 1942. It became one of the

world's most important stopover points for planes ferrying from Brazil to Africa, and also functioned as a major anti-submarine base.

Close to 10,000 aircraft were shipped in an easterly direction via Ascension. The War Department announced that "probably no base has such strategic significance," and pointed out that it was one of the main gateways "through which the United States sent increasingly heavy air power, so important in driving the Axis out of North Africa and forcing the surrender of Italy."

Major William N. VICKERS, of Arlington, Virginia, and a native of Beaumont, Texas, was pilot of the FIRST plane to land on the island's Wideawake Airfield, which was built by American engineers in three months. He flew there from Africa.

Ascension-based planes found their part of the ocean ideally located for hunting enemy submarines. The FIRST Italian undersea craft was destroyed near the island by an Army bomber piloted by Lieutenant James B. HARDEN, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The bombardier who delivered the telling blow was Lieutenant Edgar W. KELLER, of Toccoa, Georgia. The same airmen sank two submarines in two days while operating about 300 miles from their base.

TRANSPORT TERMINALS

The map of AAF communication routes over which the Air Transport Command operated shows the northern coast of South America dotted with air-base locations. The connecting networks were all accessible to the Atlantic. The string of bases in the Latin countries was a mighty factor in maintaining a steady flow of planes, machines, and men to the fighting fronts "over there."

A spectacular, and even legendary figure in this air travel development and upkeep was Major Arthur WILLIAMS, of Upland, California. A pilot and No. 1 airline operator in British Guiana, he was the FIRST aviator to fly over the jungles of that country. The aboriginal Indians re-

garded him as a sort of god. They referred to all planes they saw as "the Williams."

Brigadier General Harold L. CLARK, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, was a wing leader in the Troop Carrier Command. He acted as co-pilot in the FIRST flight of a C-47 transport between the Azores and Bermuda when he returned from airborne operations in Holland.

CONVOY CASUALTIES

Good luck pursued the operations of destroyer escorts in the Atlantic until the sinking of the USS *LEOPOLD*, on March 10, 1944. This Navy DE was the FIRST ship of her type lost in combat action.

Skipped by Coast Guard Commander Kenneth C. PHILLIPS, of Turners Falls, Massachusetts and Glenbrook, Connecticut, the *LEOPOLD* was on convoy duty in a rough sea. A general alarm was set off, and when the men reached their guns they beheld an enemy submarine with her decks awash.

After the Americans fired six shells, some of them finding their mark, the U-boat delivered a "Sunday punch" dooming the DE. Only 28 of the crew were saved. More than 100 lost their lives, including Phillips and all the other officers. The ship had been named in honor of Ensign Robert L. LEOPOLD, of Louisville, Kentucky, Pearl Harbor hero, killed on the battleship *ARIZONA*.

The FIRST casualty among Jewish chaplains in World War II was Alexander GOODE, of York, Pennsylvania, who sacrificed his life to save another's. When a cargo-transport vessel was torpedoed along the Atlantic convoy route, in July, 1942, the rabbi was prepared to abandon ship when he encountered a fellow passenger who had no life preserver. Although the chaplain knew he could not get another, he gave the distressed man his own. He went down bravely with the ship.

Seaman Oscar G. CHAPPELL, of Normangee, Texas,

became the FIRST Merchant Marine hero of the war to be honored under a new policy of the Maritime Commission of naming new Liberty ships after all seamen awarded the Distinguished Service Medal posthumously.

Stationing himself at the helm of a torpedoed and burning tanker, early in 1943, Chappell refused to abandon the post when enveloped by flames. He died of burns suffered while steering the vessel into the wind, in order to give his shipmates a chance to escape the raging fire.

CHAPTER 5

FIRST CONTACT WITH EUROPE'S FRONTIERS

Hitler, like Napoleon, fell short of supreme dictatorship in Europe because of his failure to conquer Russia and England.

Both of these military shortcomings were to have a tremendous bearing on the outcome of World War II. Of transcendent importance to America was the stalemate in the Battle of Britain at the time we entered the war.

With the Germans unable or unwilling to invade the island, the United States took unrestricted advantage of the opportunity of gaining a foothold in Europe.

From the start until the finish of the war, the British Isles, virtually honeycombed with American bases, served as steppingstones for victory.

The 8th Air Force was activated at Savannah, Georgia, on January 28, 1942, and its first units arrived in England on May 12. The "early birds" were under the direction of General (then Major General) Carl (Tooey) SPAATZ, of Boyertown, Pennsylvania, who thus became the FIRST United States air commander in the United Kingdom.

The FIRST United States expeditionary force in Europe landed in Northern Ireland on January 26, 1942, forty-six

days after the Axis declared war against this country. The ground troops were under the direction of Major General Russell P. HARTLE, of Hagerstown, Maryland.

On the following day, Major General James E. CHANEY, of Wichita Falls, Texas, and a native of Chaney, Maryland, was named the FIRST commander of all American forces in the United Kingdom.

The first Army contingent was convoyed across the Atlantic without casualties. The only discordant note was the unheeded protest of Prime Minister de Valera, of the Eire government, against the landing. (Northern Ireland was under British control.)

Sergeant Milburn HENKE, of Hutchinson, Minnesota, was the FIRST soldier to go ashore. He was hospitalized in his first fighting in North Africa and won the Silver Star for aiding a wounded comrade in combat.

PULVERIZATION PROGRAM

More than three months elapsed after the setting up of headquarters before America's great air arm was ready to take off independently from England and strike at Nazi-occupied Europe. The early attacks were more or less in the experimental category.

The two great goals were the destruction of the Luftwaffe as an effective air force and the pulverization of German production. The latter objective was summed up by General Henry H. ARNOLD, commander of the AAF, in these words: "Our concern is to make the coming invasion of Germany as economical as possible by drastically reducing the war potential of the Third Reich and its satellites."

Lieutenant Colonel Cecil LESSIG, of Ellsworth, Kansas, was the FIRST American in a U. S. Army uniform to fly against Hitler's Europe.

The FIRST airman to die in combat over the North Sea was Lieutenant Donald WALTER, of Painesville, Ohio. He was a co-pilot.

In the same air engagement, Lieutenant Swart SCONI-

ERS, of De Funiak Springs, Florida, was heralded as the FIRST outstanding hero of English-based flyers. He was pilot of one of four Flying Fortresses which knocked out twelve Nazi fighter planes and repulsed thirteen others. The bombers were unescorted when attacked by the enemy.

BOMBINGS BEGIN

An American crew in a British plane wrote a new page in history on June 29, 1942. They borrowed a medium bomber and made a raid on a target at Hazebrouck, in occupied France. It was the FIRST attack ever made by AAF airmen based in Britain. The pilot was Colonel (then Captain) Charles C. KEGELMAN, of El Reno, Oklahoma.

The same flyer, who was a squadron commander at the time, did some more pioneering on July 4 of the same year. He led the FIRST official mission against Hitler's domain in which Americans shared with British airmen in attack. There were twelve RAF Boston bombers altogether, six of them manned by AAF crews. Airdromes in Holland were the targets. Kegelmann's performance was outstanding. He brought his badly damaged plane home on one engine after striking the ground when hit by German gunfire.

The Oklahoma flyer, who was also the FIRST U. S. airman to receive the Distinguished Service Cross in Europe, was killed in action over Mindanao Island, in the Philippines, March 9, 1945, while serving as a group commander in the 13th Air Force.

FLYING FORTRESS

Flying Fortresses made their bow in Western Europe combat action on August 17, 1942. It was the FIRST all-American bombing raid by the 8th Air Force. Co-commander in the attack, Brigadier General (then Colonel) Frank A. ARMSTRONG, Jr., of Nashville, North Carolina, dropped the FIRST bomb on the target.

Eighteen planes went on the mission, twelve of them

striking at the railway yards and shops at Rouen, while the others made a diversionary sweep over the coast of France.

Armstrong also led the FIRST wave of bombers in the FIRST all-American attack on Germany proper, when Wilhelmshaven targets were plastered by 53 Fortresses, on January 27, 1943.

The general's greatest individual feat was when he flew the leading bomber in a heavy raid on Amsterdam, some weeks later. His formation was attacked by 150 enemy fighters. They concentrated on Armstrong's plane, but the general kept his aircraft under control through 25 assaults. His bomber was hit five times. He left his post to administer first aid to his wounded navigator and was credited with saving his life.

Lieutenant William V. OWENS, of Columbus, Ohio, piloted the FIRST American bomber plane ever flown over Berlin, in the sensational raid of March 4, 1944.

TRANSCENDENT THUNDERBOLTS

The speedy P-47 Thunderbolt was introduced to European air warfare on March 10, 1943. The FIRST of these super-fighter planes to shoot down a Nazi aircraft was piloted by Colonel (then Major) James J. STONE, Jr., of Plainfield and Westfield, New Jersey. He later became commanding officer of a fighter base in England. His group destroyed more than 175 German planes.

Twenty-three-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Chesley G. PETERSON, of Santaquin and Salt Lake City, Utah and Los Angeles, California, was the squadron commander in this FIRST air battle of Thunderbolts over Europe, off Walcheren, in the Netherlands. He personally shot down a Messerschmitt on this occasion; bagged eight more on subsequent missions; was decorated eight times; was twice plunged into the sea during engagements, being saved on both occasions by the British air-sea rescue squadron.

Peterson was one of the eight original members of the American Eagle squadron of the British RAF during the

Battle of Britain. He became one of the youngest full colonels in the AAF late in 1943.

MURDEROUS MUSTANGS

The deepest penetration into Germany by fighter planes based in England was recorded when the new and murderous P-51 Mustang went into action near the close of 1943. Speed was a No. 1 asset of this useful aircraft, built to fly in excess of 425 miles an hour. Equally as important was the fact the plane had a tactical radius of more than 500 miles and soared to altitudes above 40,000 feet.

Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth R. MARTIN, of Kansas City, Missouri, was commander of the FIRST group of these long-range, single-engine fighters to be sent out on a mission. He was reported missing in action after personally rolling up a score of 4½ Nazi aircraft shot down. The Missourian was later revealed as a prisoner in a German hospital, recovering from wounds caused by his crash. The next word from Martin was that he had escaped from captivity in April, 1945.

The first fifteen missions of the Mustang gave it a better than 6 to 1 superiority over the enemy in air battles.

The old reliable Lightning plane was the workhorse of U. S. fighter craft before the advent of the faster Thunderbolt and Mustang. Its action in North Africa and the Mediterranean theater was outstanding.

Lieutenant Joseph FORD, of Linden, Alabama, was the FIRST pilot in the 8th Air Force to win the Distinguished Flying Cross. In his first time in the air in combat, and while flying a P-38, he shepherded a pair of crippled Lightnings home through enemy fighters, flak, and bad weather.

PILOTLESS PLANE : BUZZ BOMB

Hitler's secret weapon, the eerie robot (buzz) bomb, often referred to as the "pilotless plane," inflicted 80 days of horror on London. Launched at the average rate of 100 a

day across the channel from the coast of France, the "Vergeltungswaffe No. 1" bombs destroyed 870,000 buildings and killed 5,817 persons before the menace was whipped.

Among the American victims (some of them fatally injured) was Commander Ralph T. EILAND, of Washington, D. C. Inspector for the Coast Guard with a Merchant Marine unit, he was the FIRST United States casualty of flying-bomb attacks in England to return to this country. He suffered thirty wounds, caused by flying glass when one of the explosives crashed 75 feet from a house in which he was standing.

By an odd circumstance, Captain Albert E. REUNING, of Jackson, Mississippi, shot down the FIRST pilotless plane to be destroyed in Southern England. His kill was made with a 40-mm. gun which was scheduled to be shipped to Normandy, France. The captain had just shot the last bolt in place on the weapon when he noticed the oncoming robot. Reuning, a moment before, had had no idea he was going to need the gun for such a purpose, but after his well-timed shot effaced the bomb he opined his weapon had been a handy article to have around.

Patrol planes shot down more than 1,900 of the bombs in the London "belt of defense." The kills were made, for the most part, by British fighter aircraft.

Sergeant Jack BARRON, of West Des Moines, Iowa, a top turret gunner on a Liberator, was the FIRST bomber crewman to destroy one of the explosives.

"Robot planes without pilots," which the Nazis had hoped would reduce London to smouldering ruins, faded out of the picture as just another "war scare" when the Canadian and British armies destroyed the rocket coastal launching bases, extending from Le Havre to the border of Belgium.

Protection of the thousands of United States service men in England was another defense problem adequately solved. Captain David B. ANDERSON, of Osakis, Minnesota, was commander of the FIRST American battery to join London's air-raid defense belt. His force caused much ack-ack damage to Nazi bombers over England.

SNOWBALL SKY SERVICE

High-priority freight and very important persons were carried across the Atlantic via the "Snowball" route. The FIRST trip in the daily operations of the 2nd Foreign Transport Group of ATC's ferrying division—from Presque Isle, Maine, to England—was made in a plane piloted by Captain John C. O'BRIEN, of Long Beach, California, in July, 1944. Five hundred other crossings to the United Kingdom and Paris were made in the following five months by the four-engined transports, flying 11,000,000 passenger miles and 5,000,000 ton miles.

The code name was always—"Snowball."

Previously, the 8th Air Force inaugurated a sky-freight line to supplement regular shipments between America and England. Colonel Orie W. COYLE, of Burbank, California, conducted the FIRST flight in this ATC service.

Colonel Arthur J. PIERCE, of Lubbock, Texas, founder of the Ferry and Transport Division of the 8th Air Force Service Command, was the FIRST member of the organization to be awarded the Legion of Merit.

The FIRST non-stop flight from London to Washington, D. C. was made in a C-54 Douglas piloted by Major Henry T. MYERS, of Tifton, Georgia, aide to Lieutenant General Harold L. George, commander of the Air Transport Command. Myers covered the 3,800 miles in eleven hours, in July, 1944.

The Georgian flew many dignitaries, making highly important journeys. He negotiated an astounding 3,200-mile jump from Ceylon to Australia, and another time made a 2,400-mile non-stop trip from Scotland to Algiers.

Major Allen C. RUSSELL, of North Hollywood, California, was the FIRST member of the 8th Air Force Service command to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross, being cited for saving three damaged Flying Fortresses and returning them to combat duty.

A flying partner of Russell's, Sergeant Burton A. DAVIS, of Mount Morris, Illinois, was the FIRST enlisted man in

the same organization, in Europe, to be awarded the Air Medal.

The FIRST woman to hold the post of co-pilot of a transport plane was Helen RICHEY, of McKeesport, Pennsylvania. She flew ferrying fighter aircraft as a member of the British Air Transport Auxiliary for one year without an accident.

Assistant chief of staff of the Troop Carrier Command, Major Vincent F. HARRINGTON, of Sioux City, Iowa, died of natural causes in the British Isles. A former Notre Dame football star, he was the FIRST member of Congress to resign to enter the armed service.

LURKING LIBERATORS

The United States Navy acquired its FIRST air base in the British Isles early in 1944, although its planes had been operating there for more than six months.

Patrol missions by Liberators were undertaken as part of the Allied campaign against U-boats. Enemy submarines based along the French coast at that time were using the Bay of Biscay route to reach the mid-Atlantic. Three squadrons of lurking American bombers flew more than 13,000 sorties from the British base before it was taken over by our Navy on March 23. Commander Thomas DURFEE, of Massachusetts, was the FIRST commander of the station.

Among the early accomplishments of the Liberators was the tracking down of three Nazi warships in one day, all of which were blasted out of the war by the British Navy.

LONDON LUMINARIES

Two high Army officers serving in London in widely divergent capacities, with each having highly specialized talents, were Brigadier Generals Richard G. TINDALL, Sr., of St. Louis, Missouri and a native of Columbia in the same state, and James L. BLAKENEY, of Little Rock, Arkansas.

Tindall wound up his war activities as a military attaché

in the British capital after serving in a similar role in Ankara, Turkey. At the start of hostilities he commanded the FIRST experimental tank-destroyer units while stationed at Camp Hood, Texas.

Blakeney, who later functioned as chief chaplain of the 9th Service Command, was the FIRST American to deliver a sermon at ancient King's Chapel of the Savoy in London.

The FIRST American citizen living in England to be sworn into the U. S. Army was Private William MacNEISH, Jr., of East Rockaway, New York.

Sergeant Wallace R. BEST, of Raleigh, North Carolina, was the groom, and Private Mary E. ELLIOTT, of Kingston, North Carolina, the bride, in the FIRST wedding in England involving two noncommissioned members of the Army and the WACS.

The FIRST woman first sergeant in the army was Virginia M. ROSEKRANS, of Chicago, Illinois, a native of Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. She served as a Wac at air-force headquarters in England.

Captain Jocelyn CORBETT, of Flushing, New York, was the FIRST British ATS recruit in 1938, and appeared on thousands of patriotic posters calling for volunteers. She was transferred to the American WAC in London.

The FIRST American volunteer in the Polish Women's Army was Lieutenant Halina EMINOWICZ, of New York. The organization was made up of women guerrilla fighters (the Pestki), and this lieutenant's training for defensive warfare in the invasion of Europe was in Scotland.

EASTERN EUROPEAN EMBROILMENT

Nazi-dominated Romania was the target in the first great American attack of the war in Eastern Europe. In a sensational low-level, daylight raid on August 1, 1943, an armada of close to 175 Libyan-based Liberators dropped 600,000 pounds of explosives on seven huge refineries in the great Ploesti oil fields.

The effect on the German war machine was soon appar-

ent. The Nazi drive against Russia was slowed down appreciably. The oil fields were the most important source for Axis petroleum products, and the five U. S. bombardment groups had destroyed more than 42 per cent of the enemy's fuel resources.

The Russians had attacked Ploesti intermittently, but never in great force. An American squadron of fifteen bombers had also previously struck the target.

The mighty August raid—the FIRST big air assault of the war in the Balkans—was led by Brigadier General Uzal G. ENT, of Northumberland, Pennsylvania. This officer later was transferred from the 9th Air Force to assume command of the 2nd Air Force. He was seriously injured in a plane accident in Texas fourteen months after his Romanian accomplishment.

INFERNO IMPEDIMENTA

The Liberators “flew through solid walls of flame” in that memorable attack on the Romanian fields. The run over the target was described as a “Dante’s Inferno” by Brigadier General (then Colonel) Leon W. JOHNSON, of Savannah, Georgia, a native of Columbia, Missouri. His “Susy Q” plane returned to base, after a round trip of 2,400 miles, with forty holes in its fuselage.

For his feats in leading one of the formations over Ploesti, Johnson was decorated in the FIRST dual award of the Medal of Honor for a single air action. He also was a leader in the FIRST all-American raid on Germany, at Wilhelms-haven.

The other airman who shared with Johnson in the FIRST Medal of Honor dual award for an air operation was Colonel John R. (Killer) KANE, of Shreveport, Louisiana. He was also a bombardment group commander in the Romanian raid. His unit shot down 33 Axis aircraft and left the target area a mass of fire and smoke. With his plane badly crippled by enemy opposition, Kane limped back home after a “nightmarish” flight.

Another Medal of Honor winner in the same raid crashed into the blazing target area. He was Major John JERSTAD, of Racine, Wisconsin. A volunteer pilot in the mission, this officer was assigned to the FIRST plane approaching the oil fields. Three miles from the target, his Liberator was struck by a burst of enemy flak.

Although his aircraft was burning, Jerstad refused to drop out and effect a safe landing. He feared such a course would jeopardize his formation. Flames spread over the plane, but he managed to get the bombs away accurately. His ship went down, and he was reported missing in action.

Jerstad previously had led a mission of Liberators against Vegesack, with the famous "Ted and His Traveling Circus" outfit, which resulted in a declaration by AAF headquarters that "the experimental period is over in demonstrating the practicability of daylight raids by heavy bombers."

Lieutenant David R. KINGSLEY, of Portland, Oregon, was the FIRST member of the 15th Air Force to be awarded the Medal of Honor. A bombardier, he sacrificed his life to save an enlisted man while on a mission over the Ploesti fields in a subsequent raid, on June 23, 1944. Kingsley gave his parachute harness to a wounded tail-gunner. Then he flew to his death in the crippled plane.

EPOCHAL EVACUATION

A spectacular mass evacuation of 1,126 airmen who had been shot down over the Ploesti oil fields and interned in Romania was, in a large measure, the brain child of Lieutenant Colonel James A. GUNN, III, of Kelseyville, California. In a series of daring adventures, beginning in Bucharest, he managed to reach Italy, where his collaboration with Allied officers was a telling factor in the ensuing liberation formalities.

An armistice had been declared in Romania, but the Nazis were continuing their belligerence. FIRST of the flyers to

leave the prison camp, Colonel Gunn began his adventures following his escape by hiding in the fuselage of a German Messerschmitt plane piloted by a Romanian ace who had shot down 64 Allied planes before his country renounced the Axis. The two skymen played cat and mouse with the enemy for days until they finally contacted American air headquarters. Steps were soon taken for the repatriation of the prisoners, who eventually were removed to Italy by a fleet of 38 Flying Fortresses.

Lieutenant James J. MICELI, of Jackson Heights, New York, radio operator, was the FIRST of the rescued flyers to return to Allied soil.

... ROMANIAN RESURGENCE

Romania terminated her war with Britain, Russia, and the United States on August 23, 1944. In a coup arranged by King Mihai, the pro-Nazi premier was forced out of office and armistice terms were accepted with the Allies.

Captain Floyd I. ROBINSON, of Indianapolis, Indiana, planted the FIRST United States flag to fly in Romania after the capitulation. This officer had been a prisoner of the Bucharest government after being forced down in his plane during one of the Ploesti raids.

The FIRST American planes to make a scheduled landing in Romania were piloted by Major Allen W. SCHROEDER, of Aberdeen, South Dakota, and Captain E. C. KARNES, of Los Angeles, California. They arrived in their Flying Fortresses six days after the end of hostilities there, bringing a special party assigned to arrange for the mass evacuation of the liberated flyers.

Sergeant Peter TIERNEY, of Rochester, New York, a radio operator-gunner, was the FIRST person to be saved from death by the administration of penicillin flown into Romania. Blown from his Liberator bomber, he suffered multiple injuries when he came down with the aid of his parachute, and was found by American medical officers sent to attend stranded airmen who had been wounded.

The drug was given to Tierney by Captain Richard F. KUHN, of Detroit, Michigan. A Fortress squadron flight surgeon, this officer had previously been awarded the rare Tunisian Medal by the Bey of Tunis, in recognition of mercy deeds among the native inhabitants.

ATHENS ATTACKS

America's contribution to the redemption of Greece from the yoke of Nazism was limited almost entirely to effective aerial activities. Even the British invasion was an operation "out of the sky," with parachute troops landing from naval vessels and in transport planes. Greece had been occupied by Hitler's insatiable land-grabbers early in 1941. The foe was not driven out by the Allies and the guerrilla forces until October, 1944.

The FIRST American raid over the Greek mainland was led by one of the greatest air commanders of the war—Colonel Keith K. COMPTON, of St. Joseph, Missouri. His 376th Bombardment Group, known as the "Liberandos," shot down 108 German planes in 200 missions and performed brilliantly in attacks on thirteen Axis convoys. The Missourian claimed his "Blue Streak" Liberator was "the greatest bomber of them all." His flyers, affiliated with the famous "Ted and His Flying Circus" outfit, inflicted great damage to Nazi air facilities in the vicinity of Athens.

LANE LANDS LEADERS

Completion of the British parachute-invasion landing in Greece in October, 1944 was carried out by American troop planes.

United States officers directing the operations were brought to the scene by Captain Robert LANE, of San Diego, California. He was the FIRST Yankee flyer to make a scheduled descent into the outer defense zone of Athens. The mission was completed in the teeth of a 30-mile gale.

The FIRST arrival of an American plane in the area

several days earlier was credited to Lieutenant Andrew D. MARSHALL, of Bristol, Virginia, but was not an accomplishment of his own choosing. A Negro pilot of a Thunderbolt, he crash-landed while on a strafing mission. He was hidden in the hills by members of the Greek popular liberation army. When the Germans evacuated Megara, after the British invasion, this flyer was paraded triumphantly into the city while astride a horse.

BALKAN BOMBER

Brigadier General Carlyle H. RIDENOUR, of Pasadena, California, was the FIRST American general to be wounded in combat in the Balkans. He suffered a flak injury in the leg while leading a bomber foray in person over the Larissa airfield in Greece.

In the latter country, as well as in Albania, the air officer and his medium-bomber crews spread destruction in the pathway of Nazi troop movements when the enemy tried to cope with pro-Allied guerrilla forces. Previously Ridenour had waged a "private war" in softening Axis defenses in Tunisia, going from there to Sardinia and Sicily. In Italy he was boss of a Liberator wing which pounded targets in Germany.

RUSSIAN RECIPROCITY

Establishment of American air bases in Russia in the spring of 1944 was heralded as "another nail for Hitler's coffin." Combat operations from the new fields were inaugurated on June 2, marking the FIRST fighting collaboration of the United States and the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe.

Previously Allied air raids on Germany had been possible only from the south and the west. The eastern base gave us easy aerial access to any part of the Reich.

Brigadier General Alfred A. KESSLER, Jr., of Sacramento, California, was leader of the FIRST air group sent to the Soviet Union to establish the fields. A wing com-

mander in the 8th Air Force, he was responsible for the technical work in establishing the bases.

Hungarian and Romanian installations were hit in the initial raid involving the use of the fields. The bombers took off from Italian bases and landed in Russia after striking their targets. It was a highly successful shuttle-bombing operation.

SOVIET SKIES

Lieutenant Colonel John R. HOOVER, of Cresson, Pennsylvania, flew the FIRST shuttle reconnaissance mission from England to Russia. He obtained important photos of military installations deep in Europe. One of his previous performances was also noteworthy. He blasted an Axis warship along the Mediterranean coast, while piloting his photo patrol plane, by dropping his auxiliary fuel tanks. It was his 62nd mission, and before that he had flown 70,000 miles over enemy territory.

The FIRST all-fighter plane flight to Russia was led by Colonel Yancey S. TARRANT, of Brownwood, Texas. He was commander of the 31st Group of Mustangs, which shot down 495 enemy planes in more than two years of operations. His most sensational exploit occurred during the Sicilian campaign. Tarrant led a flight of A-36 Invader planes on this occasion, wiping out a battalion of German ground soldiers assembled in an olive grove. His flyers virtually erased the spot, less than a mile square, from the map by releasing twenty tons of bombs among the trees and then strafing the place with 36,000 rounds of ammunition.

Lieutenant Colonel William JACKSON, of South Pittsburg, Tennessee, was commander of the FIRST American hospital established in Russia. His institution served the first U. S. bases set up in the Soviet Union.

CHAPTER 6

FIRST INVASION OF WESTERN EUROPE

Four thousand ships, 10,000 airplanes, 250,000 men and their equipment sped terrifyingly across the English Channel on June 6, 1944, to open the most comprehensive land campaign of World War II.

Savagely attacking Hitler's Atlantic-wall defense, this great Allied force came to grips with the formidable armies of Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt in Normandy, France.

The expedition over the treacherous channel waters had been launched not without great misgivings by the combined chiefs of staff. This grave concern did not stem from any doubt the invaders could adequately cope with their adversaries, once the landings had been made according to schedule. The uncertainty had to do with weather conditions.

The invasion, originally set for the previous day, had been postponed because meteorologists predicted stormy weather and it did turn out that way. Consensus was that the amphibious assault would have backfired had the warnings been disregarded.

So the forecasters were right again when they said the elements would behave to a reasonable extent on June 6. The weather was windy, however, and the sea choppy. Tide and time of attack were in perfect alignment with the overall scheme of operation. The night channel-crossing of the convoys afforded darkness to hide the power and direction of the different assaults.

Then there were the precious minutes of daylight, following sunrise, needed to complete bombing and prepara-

tory bombardment before the unleashing of the ground attack. Another providential factor was the low tide, which enabled the removal of the then uncovered beach impediments.

AIR FORCE ARTISTRY

The largest airborne force in history started "hitting the silk" around midnight. Two divisions poured forth on the Cotentin Peninsula. This was the initial phase of D-day landings. Troops were dropped behind the German lines.

Pacing the first great land smash of the Western Front was Captain Frank LILLYMAN, of Syracuse, New York. He was the FIRST Allied soldier to touch France in the invasion strike. He had been told in advance of the No. 1 assignment.

Trained for pinpoint precision landings, Lieutenant Colonel J. L. CROUCH, of Riverside, California, was pilot of the FIRST plane to go in, carrying Lillyman. He thereby directed the other parachute troops and gliders to the "DZ"—dropping zone. The arrivals were helped immeasurably by the moonlight.

Disruption of Nazi rear lines was the task of these paratroopers, their difficult and sometimes harrowing chores including the destruction of railyards, vital bridges, and German strongpoints. They carried the brunt of the conflict in the early D-day action, leaving many burning buildings and demolitions.

Major Henry G. PLITT, of New York City, was the FIRST paratrooper of his division to come down in Normandy, according to later reports. Months afterwards he gained the distinction of capturing the infamous Jew-baiter, Julius Streicher, in his hideout in the Reich.

CAMPAIGN CASUALTIES

A D-day accident in the FIRST attempt to disgorge troops cost the life of Brigadier General Don F. PRATT, of

Brookfield, Missouri and San Francisco, California. He was the FIRST general to die in France.

The high officer, assistant commander of the 101st Airborne Division, was fatally injured while seated in the glider when the craft skidded into a tree. More fortunate was the pilot of the glider "The Fighting Falcon," Lieutenant Colonel Michael C. MURPHY, of Lafayette, Indiana, although seriously hurt, becoming the FIRST casualty among officers to be returned to the United States.

FIRST glider pilot to touch French soil unscathed was Flight Officer Thomas W. GREGORY, of Northside (Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania. He was later killed in action.

PACESETTING PARATROOPERS

Paratroopers were the pacesetters of D-day, landing as they did almost seven hours before ground troops poured off ships onto the beachhead. Theirs was a made-to-order job of driving the Germans away from the beachhead area in advance of the arrival of the infantry. Greatly outnumbered, they carried out their mission on strange terrain in small groups, fighting cowboy-and-Indian fashion.

One group leader in these essential knockdown-and-dragout brawls was Colonel Ralph B. BAGBY, of Evanston, Illinois and New Haven, Missouri. He became the FIRST parachute invader to return to England from France, with a record of blowing up bridges, putting Nazi guns out of action, and blocking roads.

The performance of Colonel Bagby was an exemplification of the adage, "You can't keep a good man down." Un-scheduled for D-day action, he became a "bad boy" in the eyes of superiors, going AWOL on the invasion. Reprimanded, he was nevertheless decorated. No wonder! His landing was atop a large building housing German headquarters for that area. The abbreviated "hit-the-silk" force captured all the Nazi brass surprised out of their sleep.

As one chronicler stated it, the troop-carrier groups of the war wrote a story of accomplishment in a roaring demonstration of what air cargo could do to bring victory. One such was the famed 435th, commanded by Colonel Frank McNEES, of St. Paul, Minnesota. His most ticklish job was that of the "landing of headquarters" of the fighting paratroopers. Aboard was Major General Maxwell D. Taylor, commander of the 101st Airborne Division. Colonel McNees' approach to perfection is illustrated by his feat of getting General Taylor on the ground within ten feet of the predetermined location of his command post. The valuable load was deposited on the west side of Cherbourg Peninsula.

The group headed by Colonel McNees was the FIRST to drop paratroopers from a V-of-V formation; FIRST to employ a static hookup for glider takeoffs; FIRST to drop paratroopers on radar homing devices without predetermined drop zone; and, following the French campaign, the FIRST troop-carrier outfit to land in Germany.

No less important than the 435th in the operation of the 200-mile-long air train in taking troops and supplies to France was the 434th Troop Carrier Group, commanded by Colonel William B. WHITACRE, of Chicago and Western Springs, Illinois. He took the FIRST gliders into Normandy, and three months later landed the FIRST paratroopers in Holland.

The man actually launching the invasion was Lieutenant Colonel John M. DONALDSON, of Birmingham, Alabama. This commander of the lead plane dumped the FIRST paratroopers, and all 81 planes of his group returned safely. Among other units a dozen C-47s and as many gliders were reported missing in the first 24 hours of operations.

Colonel Whitacre's force, teaming up with the 435th, flew a constant stream of supplies to front-line air strips, evacuated wounded by air, and convoyed repatriated troops.

H-HOUR HADES

Eleven soldiers spearheaded the first plunge of paratroopers onto French soil. Commanded by Captain Lillyman in the drop, the group was made up of specialists in scouting, demolition, first aid, and gunnery. Private John McFARLEN, of Abilene, Texas, was the FIRST private to touch France. The FIRST full-fledged scout to jump was Private Frederic WILHELM, of Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Corporal Thomas WALTON, of Camden, New Jersey was the FIRST corporal on the ground. The FIRST Army specialist in dynamiting and demolition to go into action was Private John ZAMANAKES, of Lowell, Massachusetts.

"It's hell down there," remarked a parson, the FIRST chaplain to jump into the Carentan area. This Reverend Raymond HALL, of Lynn, Massachusetts, was referring to the experiences of the doughboys when the Nazis put up a stubborn fight before the Americans captured Carentan. Another attesting to the terrors of an enemy counterattack was Lieutenant Jack BORCHERT, of Denver, Colorado, who led the FIRST assault company of paratroopers to land in this same Carentan sector. After crossing three bridges, he lost some of his men during the enemy upsurge on the outskirts of the town, but he personally escaped injury with only torn clothing and a helmet battered by Nazi shrapnel and bullets.

WEST WALL WALLOPING

"We are getting into a fight. . . . It is the enemy who is afraid," were the belligerent words of Vice Admiral (then Rear Admiral) Alan G. KIRK, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Black Point, Connecticut, on the morning of the U. S. Navy's great assault on Hitler's Atlantic Wall. The volumes he spoke were backed up by his commanders in the form of a merciless pounding of the foe from 640 naval ships shouldering the assignment of silencing most of the German coastal batteries.

A tornado of fire reached to the skies and roared both

east and west, farther than the eye could see. The FIRST breaches were ripped into Fortress Europe.

Invasion by sea is the most difficult of all military operations. Famous warships in this instance blazed the path of destruction and cleared the coast so that the foot soldiers could go ashore. This and the landings were accomplished with great effectiveness.

Admiral Kirk commanded the Western Task Force composed of American ships. To the east were the British, who furnished 60 per cent of the combined fleet.

BULL'S-EYE BATTLESHIP

Almost mortally battered by five heavy Japanese bombs and a torpedo at Pearl Harbor, the famous battleship *NEVADA* made a bold comeback from a watery grave in the role of pacemaker in the Bay of Seine on that cold gray dawn of June 6.

The mighty warship poured the FIRST shells into Normandy. She was the FIRST to be fired on from shore batteries.

Proud Captain Powell M. RHEA, of Washington, D. C. and Fayetteville, Arkansas, directed the masterpiece of naval warfare written over a period of three days. Fifteen hundred shells were sent screaming into German gun emplacements, shelters, and troop and tank concentrations. A total of 1,454,722 pounds of steel and TNT hit the Nazi defenses.

A perfect D-day record on all targets was accomplished. Her guns spoke 4,747 times, finding marks from Barfleur to Carentan. Her range was seventeen land miles.

The FIRST American gunfire into France was directed by Lieutenant Commander Charles W. TRAVIS, of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and his specific task was the breaching of the sea wall so that the tanks could get off the beaches. In one instance, the *NEVADA* destroyed or damaged ninety tanks and twenty trucks in a wood 26,400 yards away. On June 12, this warship wiped out battery headquarters of the enemy in sixty minutes of firing.

SPEARHEAD SPECIALIST

A havoc-dispenser in the Philippine waters, Commander (then Lieutenant Commander) John D. BULKELEY, of Long Island City, Queens, New York, gave Hitler's hirelings a taste of his prowess in two invasions of France. Spearheading the sea-borne expedition to Normandy, his force of PT boats were the FIRST Navy craft to go into action.

Commander of all motor torpedo boats in the English Channel, he took his stand within gun range of the French coast the afternoon before D-day to be in a position to fight off the multitude of Nazi E-boats waiting to attack the Allied armada.

The speedy craft of the commander, who took General MacArthur from the Philippines when the Japs were closing in on Corregidor, also shepherded a fleet of more than 100 minesweepers clearing the way for the oncoming fleet.

Two months later, in a new assignment as skipper of the destroyer *ENDICOTT*, Bulkeley sank two Nazi corvettes in the Mediterranean off Ciotat, took 169 enemy prisoners, rescued two crippled British gunboats, and seized the secret charts of all mine fields along the southern coast of France. This staggering action occurred about six hours before H-hour in the Allied invasion of southern France.

DEADLY DESTROYERS

Typical of the deadly licks landed by American destroyers during the first hours of the invasion was the pacesetting performance of the USS *BARTON*. Aboard was a famous movie personage, Lieutenant Commander Henry (Robert) MONTGOMERY, of Los Angeles and Hollywood, California, and he directed the FIRST shots of a hardy collection of ships on D-day. In his role as operations officer for a destroyer squadron commander, he was no less a hero than during his thespian career.

Montgomery, the FIRST top American film star to enter active war service, called for destroyer fire in the blasting of

enemy fortifications in skillful pinpoint target technique. Fleeing Nazis were cut down in intermittent bursts of firing from the 40-millimeter guns.

The Hollywood man was a volunteer ambulance driver in the United States field service in France in 1940, joined the naval reserve the following year, and participated in many campaigns in the South Pacific, including the Solomons, before his assignment with Destroyer Squadron 60 engaged in convoying to Europe and the invasion front.

Another destroyer in the English Channel fracas was less fortunate than the *BARTON*. Among the three vessels of her class lost in this campaign, the USS *CORRY* was the FIRST destroyer sunk in the landing operations. She was skippered by Lieutenant Commander George D. HOFFMAN, of Chelan, Washington, listed as a survivor in the tragedy. Previously this ship had destroyed a U-boat and provided supporting fire to the Allied landings in the North African invasion.

Of the seven American commanders of ships sunk in the invasion, Lieutenant Commander Allord B. HAYWARD, of Charleston, South Carolina, was the FIRST to be killed in action when his minesweeper *TIDE* went down.

EFFICIENT ELSIES

Mission No. 2 of the combined fleets on D-day involved the Little Navy—the so-called “Elsies.” Smoke from the coastal ruins wrought by the warship bombardment was still curling skyward when the monumental task was begun of unloading these many convoys of landing boats.

LSTs (tank-landing ships), known as the “Queens of the Elsie,” were the first small craft to disgorge their precious cargoes. Other landing boats were in the sea parade, with the objective of unloading ground combat forces, guns, tanks, shells, field rations, bandages, hypodermics, radios and trucks.

FIRST to land on the beach with assault troops was LST-314, skippered by Lieutenant Commander Alvin H. (Buck)

TUTT, of De Queen, Arkansas. (This "Elsie" was later sunk in the same campaign. The Ozark-country commander was listed missing.) Efficient air coverage allowed his and other craft to complete their multitudinous tasks almost unmolested. Main targets of the enemy machine-gun nests were the troops just after hitting the beach.

Most of the boats came to stops on a sand bar a few feet from the shore. The FIRST tiller to return to English base with an eyewitness story was Coxwain Richard ANDREWS, of Hughesville, Pennsylvania. His plywood vessel, an LCPV (landing craft vehicle personnel), was the FIRST to return from Normandy.

AMPHIBIOUS AGGRESSION

The Navy's goal for the last year of war was a 100,000-craft fleet for amphibious warfare. As of the French campaign, there were more than 48,000 landing craft on all seas. That the "Elsies" came through is evidenced in the case of the LSTs, whose losses totaled only forty during the entire war. Five were sunk off Normandy. The FIRST to go down in this campaign was the LST 499, skippered by Lieutenant E. F. WITTE, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The importance of landing craft was illustrated when it became necessary early in 1944 to postpone the western European invasion several months, because enough of these boats were not available to support the campaign. Originally it had been the intention to conduct the operations in north and south France at the same time. But shortage of craft prevented this. One million workers were engaged in 74 American shipyards in turning out the "Elsies." The Ohio and Mississippi Rivers were the main outlets for these completed craft. Pittsburgh and New Orleans, with huge plants, and Evansville with the largest inland shipyards in the nation, were among the hundreds of contributors to this vast undertaking.

A matter of seconds before H-hour was the time element

involving the landing of the FIRST wave of small assault boats between Cherbourg and Le Havre, and the commander of the outfit was Lieutenant Abraham CONDIOTTI, of Brooklyn, New York. The leading craft carried infantrymen, the FIRST ashore.

Chief Photographer's Mate Shelby B. SMITH, of Mt. Rainier, Maryland, was in the first group of ships approaching the shore, and he was the FIRST Coast Guardsman to return to London from invasion operations.

Captain William ADAMS, of New Orleans, Louisiana, was master of the FIRST American merchant ship to carry supplies to the Allies on the Normandy beachhead. Experiencing 29 hours of Nazi bombing and artillery attack, this freighter unloaded its cargo of war materials and then fell a victim of sinking. The skipper survived.

AERIAL ASCENDANCY

Heavy bombing forces of the Allies rose to new heights of potency in supporting D-day beach penetrations. Thirteen hundred British craft assaulted heavy enemy fortifications in the darkness of Tuesday morning. After six hours the Americans stepped in.

Despite the drawback of a layer of clouds below the attacking planes, the results were declared astonishingly effective. The majority of the Nazi coastal guns were put out of action, making it easier for the landing forces. The bombers were still pounding the emplacements when the troops came ashore.

The FIRST of four-engine planes to land on ground wrested from the Germans in Western Europe was one of these Army Liberators, piloted by Lieutenant Charles W. GRACE, of Kalamazoo, Michigan. The Americans made a forced landing when two of his engines failed and the other two were damaged.

Navy Liberators were also in the thick of the fight. One squadron, skippered by Lieutenant Commander George

VON BRACHT, of San Diego, California, served as part of the aerial barrier against U-boats interfering with the advance of the invading forces.

Several months previously this commander's outfit got credit for sinking the FIRST Nazi submarine claimed by a British-based U. S. Navy plane. The pilot responsible for this feat was Lieutenant Ralph B. BROWNELL, of Helena, Montana. The scene was the Bay of Biscay. Lieutenant Brownell was never heard from again, having apparently been shot down in the operation. He was awarded the Navy Cross posthumously.

Holding forth in the same group in which Commander Von Bracht served was Lieutenant Commander Bertram J. PRUEHER, of Bloomer, Wisconsin, skipper of a patrol bombing squadron which ranked FIRST among five Navy Liberator outfits in accomplishment, as a result of sinking nine U-boats, having two probables, and doing estimated damage to sixteen others. Commander Prueher lost his life while personally sinking a hostile submarine.

The FIRST sinking of a U-boat by an American submarine was accomplished by Commander John CORBUS, Hollywood, California in the Bay of Biscay.

GOD-SENT GRASSHOPPERS

Little but collectively mighty "grasshoppers" roamed the D-day skies in heroic action as the "eyes of the artillery." Adding the element of extreme danger to the pilots, this sums up the roles played by Cub observation planes. A case in point is Lieutenant Joe FROST, of Pascagoula, Mississippi. He was pilot of the FIRST "puddle-jumper" to take to the air after U. S. troops established a beachhead line on Normandy, being the key man of his squadron while flying his craft "Lil Ole Red." He was particularly adept in his all-day chore as an observer checking on the bursts of enemy guns while hovering over them and flashing information on the location of targets for friendly artillery assaults.

Another sparkplug in the move-about, gypsy-like opera-

tions was Captain David CONDON, of Goshen, Virginia. He was the FIRST Cub pilot to land in Normandy "intentionally." By Thanksgiving Day of that year, including operations in Germany, this flyer had negotiated more than 100 trips across Nazi lines in search of gun emplacements.

The daring pilot was fired upon 168 times.

AIRWAY AISLEMEN

Meanwhile, great beves of fighter pilots were up to their kilts in their missions of protecting Allied naval craft and paving the way for the ground forces. Part of the procession of hundreds of Allied planes packing the air lanes, the fighter airmen encountered only spasmodic opposition up to the noon hour.

Rain squalls were hanging from the choppy waters to a few hundred feet farther up. When the bad weather cleared to a ceiling of 3,000 feet over France, in the early afternoon, the fighters began to have their troubles with the Nazi sharpshooters on the ground.

A crash-landing was responsible for the landing of the FIRST fighter pilot—Lieutenant Norman J. JOHNSON, of Vernal, Utah—on Allied occupied territory in France on D-day. His Thunderbolt came down while he was escorting troops and gliders.

Lieutenant John R. RICHARDS, of Tacoma, Washington, was the FIRST flyer in the 8th Air Force to land on the invasion beachhead, making a forced landing at a British base after his engine conked. He barely had time to complete the 2,008th photographic mission of the American Army Air Forces in Europe.

Another 8th Air Force plane mishap won the distinction of being the FIRST American to come down on the Royal Canadian Air Force landing strip in France for Lieutenant Frederick S. RUTAN, of Wollaston, Massachusetts. This pilot's radio caught fire from a short circuit.

Thunderbolt pilot Lieutenant Charles L. SMITH, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, was the FIRST airman to alight on an

unfinished landing strip in Normandy. He made an emergency landing to aid another flyer forced down nearby. This lieutenant flew back to his base while sitting on the lap of the rescued pilot.

FIRST pilot to alight on French soil (by choice) was Captain Richard LEARY, of Annapolis, Maryland, operations officer of a group of Thunderbolts.

D-DAY DEVILTRY

"Peck's Bad Boys," a photo reconnaissance group commanded by Colonel George PECK, of Gainesville, Texas, was the FIRST unit of the 9th Air Force to shoot down a Nazi plane on invasion day, scoring three knockdowns of enemy Focke-Wulf 190s. The FIRST kill was made by Mustang pilot Lieutenant Joseph E. CONKLIN, of Stony Point, New York.

The FIRST air-fight victory on D-day was registered by Lieutenant William M. McELMAR, of Easton, Pennsylvania, when he chased a Messerschmitt to the ground, where it exploded.

Another outstanding aerial participant on June 6 was Lieutenant William L. ADAMS, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, pilot of the FIRST Marauder bomber based in Britain to complete a mission successfully with a three-man crew. The only men available to take out the B-26 "Pickled Dilly" were the co-pilot who toggled out the bombs for the bombardier, the pilot who flew the craft and did his own radio and navigation work, and the bombardier who manned the tail guns.

WESTERN-FRONT WIZARDRY

Twenty-six years spent in the U. S. Engineers Corps gave Brigadier General James B. NEWMAN, Jr., of Washington, D. C., just the experience he needed in creating a new technique in construction wizardry that paid big dividends in American air operations. He directed the FIRST separate aviation engineer force to be activated with an air force and

under the latter's direct command when the airfield-building corpsmen moved into France during the first four hours of the invasion. Every man had been trained for heavy combat, and they were supplied with defense weapons like any other ground soldiers.

Magic-like in their smooth and quick operations, the engineers were so efficient that an entire battalion could break camp, load all equipment and supplies, and roll to a new site in a few hours. The highly mobile airfield-builders were thus able to keep tactical aircraft operating as close as possible on the tail of the retreating enemy.

One of these engineering detachments, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Max G. McCrory, of Martins Ferry, Ohio, built the FIRST Allied airstrip in France. Frequently working under the heavy guns of the enemy, this outfit completed two landing lanes in the first three days of the invasion. Another battalion, led by Lieutenant Colonel John J. Livingston, of Crystal City, Missouri, built its FIRST strip in Western Europe in six hours.

EISENHOWER EXTRAVAGANZA

General EISENHOWER'S American forces, under the leadership of General Omar N. Bradley, of Moberly, Missouri, and a native of Clark, in the same state, began the last phase of the D-day operations, at 6:30 A.M., when the first soldiers went ashore fighting from the landing boats, setting off the Battle of the Beachhead.

Winston Churchill had pledged a campaign offering a short cut to victory through the sufferance of "blood, sweat and tears." Now was the beginning, with the German strength estimated at that time as 20 to 35 divisions holding northwestern France and 15 other divisions on the channel coast from the Seine to the Rhine, northeast of the Allied landing points, appearing to be anything but a pushover.

The Allies were one up on their adversaries from the standpoint of surprise. Although Hitler was informed of the intention to strike at Normandy, he believed the move was

a feint to draw his forces away from another more likely target of attack.

The invasion locale had been selected by the joint staffs more than fourteen months previously, and it was a well-kept secret. Sergeant Wendell H. THIERS, of Chicago, Illinois, was the FIRST enlisted man to whom the information was entrusted. He was secretary to a high-ranking Army officer.

"Architect of the subsequent Normandy breakthrough," General Bradley on June 6 led the First Army to the beaches. He later became the FIRST general in American history to command four field armies in one group. As 12th Army Group commander, he had jurisdiction at one time over 1,233,000 soldiers. In the French campaign and in later drives he enjoyed equal status with General Montgomery of the British. The "doughboy general" previously carved a brilliant record as an infantry tactician in North Africa.

The 12th, in its first year of campaigning, suffered 416,406 battle casualties, including 74,237 killed. On the other hand, General Bradley's troops captured 2,600,000 Germans and killed or wounded 500,000.

SPECTACULAR SPEARHEADER

The Normandy plans of the Allies called for a quick American drive northwestward to capture Cherbourg. On the eastern flank were the British and Canadians opposed by Rommel, who lost his stronghold at Caen three days after the landings.

A spectacular spearheader in this early period of heavy and incessant fighting was General (then Lieutenant General) Courtney H. HODGES, of Perry, Georgia. He was the FIRST Army Corps commander ashore in Normandy. Later directing the First Army, his forces were the FIRST into Paris; FIRST to storm into Belgium; FIRST to establish a bridgehead across the Rhine River; FIRST to break through the Siegfried Line; FIRST to enter Germany; and

FIRST to send home a complete unit for redeployment to the Pacific.

CORPS COMMANDER

Troops landing on the central beachhead were assigned to drive toward Isigny and Carentan. This sector was Omaha Beach. It was the bloodiest barrier of first-day warfare. The FIRST Corps commander to land here was Lieutenant General (then Major General) Leonard T. GEROW, of St. Paul, Minnesota, and a native of Petersburg, Virginia.

The general came through handsomely, although his 5th Corps had to go through its mission with only two divisions. He had perhaps more responsibility than any commander, aside from Eisenhower and Bradley.

While other United States divisions were making advances on Utah Beach, farther west and nearer Cherbourg General Gerow's forces drove the Germans to the center of the combined fronts, with the British and Canadians fighting ahead on the eastern side of the Normandy battle theater. The Minnesotan's corps were subsequently the FIRST troops to enter Paris; and in the following March General Gerow was named commander of the new 15th Army on the Western Front.

LOST LEADER

The beachhead was soon expanded to a base sixty miles long and ten miles deep. The arduous campaign told tragically on one of the fighting Roosevelts. Adventurous son of the former President, Brigadier General Theodore ROOSEVELT, Jr., of Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York, died of a heart attack as he rested in a captured Nazi truck in Normandy.

General Roosevelt, assistant commanding general of the 4th Infantry Division, led the FIRST U. S. troops ashore in the 7th Corps' area on D-day. Later he became the FIRST

American officer to administer a French seaport during World War II, having acted as governor of Cherbourg for 48 hours. He also served in the Tunisian and Italian campaigns. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery and military effectiveness.

COLLEVILLE CAPTURE

Leading the FIRST unit to come off the beach on invasion day, Captain Joseph T. DAWSON, of Waco, Texas, had the tough experience, along with his courageous men, of dashing across the sandy stretch into immediate conflict, which lasted into the next day. Fighting every inch of the way inland after encountering the foe waiting for them in entrenched positions, the captain and his stalwarts reached the town of Colleville, less than two miles from the landing point.

Dawson was wounded, but his men held the stronghold. FIRST into the town was a contingent of fourteen men, led by Lieutenant Kenneth BLEAU, of Ilion, New York. Dawson's company (of the 1st Division) killed 100 Germans during the hectic advance.

Captain Leonard T. SCHROEDER, Jr., of Baltimore, Maryland, was reputedly the FIRST American to reach the Normandy beach from the sea. Wounded in the arm three hours later, he continued to command his company until its initial objective had been taken long ahead of schedule.

BATTLE BETWEEN BLITZ BUGGIES

The town of Ste. Mère Eglise was seized by paratroopers before daylight on invasion day, but by early afternoon the Germans were on the verge of turning the tables. A feverish appeal for assistance broadcast by the desperate American force precipitated the first tank battle to be fought by the Yanks in France.

Making haste along the highway, a fleet of "iron war-horses" led by Major Lynn G. YEATES, of Fort Worth,

Texas, ran into a string of hostile Mark IV tanks stretching for a distance of about two miles outside Ste. Mère Eglise. The encounter was no accident, for the Germans had deliberately planned the proceedings in their FIRST western-flank counterattack of the campaign.

FIRST to score a decisive hit on the Jerries was Lieutenant Irvin I. HINSLEY, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, company commander. He killed the gun manning one of the foremost enemy "blitz buggies." The American fire was so accurate and damaging that the foe made a sudden withdrawal to the north.

ARTILLERY ARTISTRY

American artillery artistry imposed a mounting series of back-crushing blows in the initial phases of the Battle of the Beachhead. Responsible for a clamor horrible to hostile ears, the cannoneers of these outfits smashed fortifications, destroyed tanks, liquidated 88s, and left a trail of dead Nazis.

Skipper of the FIRST field artillery gun to land on French soil was Sergeant Joseph GRIMM, Jr., of St. Louis, Missouri.

One of these outfits was made up of Negro soldiers, and Private Arthur BROADNAX, of Autaugaville, Alabama, pulled the lanyard for their FIRST round of firing.

Other highlights of the early invasion proceedings involved the following servicemen: Private James A. LESTER, of Clio, Michigan, a combat engineer, was wounded by shrapnel while landing on the beach during the first wave of the assault, and he was the FIRST casualty among enlisted men to be returned to the United States from Normandy. Major A. K. TEMPLES, of Augusta, Georgia, commanded the FIRST American field hospital to reach France.

And the women: Lieutenant Margaret STANFILL, of Hayti, Missouri, was the FIRST Yankee of her sex to arrive on the beachhead, having previously served in Africa and Sicily.

Colonel Mary (Pee Wee) HALLAREN, of Lowell, Mas-

sachusetts, who when a captain headed the FIRST contingent of Wacs assigned to the 8th Air Force in England, made the crossing of the channel to follow the troops in the Normandy invasion. She was later named director of all Wacs.

CHAPTER 7

FIRST UNITED STATES GROUND COMBAT ON THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT

The 1944 upsurge in the destinies of the Allies in France serves as a reminder of other events during the years immediately preceding the Battle of the Beachhead.

Not in the least rose-hued, in retrospect, were such calamities as the seizure of the country by the Axis and its prolonged occupation under the guidance of the Vichy government.

More heartening were a long series of telling blows delivered by the Allies in the form of air raids and attacks at sea against enemy submarines and shipping in French waters.

These softening-up activities, pending the day of all-out invasion, were supplemented in one notable instance by one of the most fascinating operations of the war—the Dieppe raid.

This hit-and-run attack on one of the queen cities of Normandy has been called a test invasion—a second-front rehearsal—and a demonstration of the practicability of establishing a new gateway into Hitler's Europe. Much was learned in that surprise raid on August 19, 1942.

Most of the troops were crack Canadian Commandos. The others were picked units of American, British, and loyal French soldiers. Our force, known as the U. S. Rangers, experienced their FIRST baptism of fire in Europe under the

leadership of Lieutenant General (then Brigadier General) Lucien K. TRUSCOTT, Jr., of Charlottesville, Virginia, and Eufala, Oklahoma, and a native of Chatfield, Texas. This veteran of campaigns in Sicily, Italy, and southern France and a spearheader in the invasion of North Africa, was given valiant aid by the Rangers' commander, Colonel William O. Darby.

SKIRMISHING SHARPSHOOTERS

More than 300 landing boats began disgorging troops and tanks at dawn. All had been on transport ships, and the entire operation was shepherded by units of the British fleet and United Nations planes. No parachutists were used.

The distinction of being the FIRST American soldier to fire a shot on the European continent in World War II went to Corporal Franklin KOONS, of Swea City, Iowa. His quick-on-the-trigger performance was prompted by the detection of German snipers.

Another sharpshooter was more fortunate in his aim. As a result, Sergeant Kenneth KENYON, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, became the FIRST Yankee soldier to shoot a German combatant in ground conflict in Western Europe.

A-1 AIRMEN

The greatest air canopy ever sent aloft up to that time gave Nazi flyers so much opposition that they could not adequately defend their embattled comrades on the ground. Aerial dogfights continued throughout the day.

Close to 100 of the 1,000 Allied planes participating were lost, while the enemy suffered the destruction or disabling of 275 aircraft.

In one of the most exciting adventures of the day, Major (then Lieutenant) Sam S. JUNKIN, of Natchez, Mississippi, became the FIRST American pilot to shoot down a German fighter plane over Europe. He liquidated a Nazi Focke-Wulf 190 while flying a Spitfire at 4,000 feet.

Only a few minutes elapsed before the lieutenant was attacked from behind. His plane was badly conked. A bullet had gone through his right shoulder.

Junkin fainted while the enemy was still in pursuit. When several hundred feet above water, he revived. He beat it skyward in order to have altitude for bailing out. He fainted again when he pulled the rip cord but came to before striking the sea. A British Commando barge rescued him.

Lieutenant Hollis H. HILLS, of Los Angeles and South Pasadena, California, was the FIRST RCAF pilot to destroy an enemy plane in the Dieppe operations. Later transferred from the Canadian Air Force, he skippered a U. S. Navy Hellcat plane, and in one engagement over Truk Atoll brought down three Jap Zeros.

DIEPPE DEPARTURE

Other points along the "Iron Coast" of France were involved indirectly in the Dieppe extravaganza. The Nazi stronghold of Rouen was raided by Allied bombers two days previously. This was done to weaken the enemy, since it was a logical place for the Nazis to call upon for reinforcing units to help meet our attack on Dieppe. In the Rouen air battle, during the raid on the railroad yards, Sergeant Kent L. WEST, of Blocton, Alabama, became the FIRST bomber crewman to shoot down a Nazi fighting plane over Europe. The sergeant was a belly gunner on a Flying Fortress.

Much of the credit for the Allied aerial success at Dieppe was given to Colonel Frederick M. DEAN, of St. Louis, Missouri and St. Petersburg, Florida, and a native of East St. Louis, Illinois. He led the FIRST fighter squadron of the AAF to engage the Germans in Western Europe. Promoted after Dieppe, the colonel was commander of the FIRST U. S. air fighter group to operate from a captured base in Sicily, in the following year. His men shot down a total of 92 Axis planes.

While acting as an antiaircraft observer on a British destroyer during the Dieppe attack, Colonel Loren B. HILL-

SINGER, of El Paso, Texas, suffered injuries which resulted in the amputation of one of his legs. Later, equipped with an artificial member, he was the FIRST officer of the air force to remain on flying status after losing a limb.

The Commandos and Rangers left Dieppe in assault boats nine hours after the landing, just six minutes behind schedule. All the main objectives had been achieved. Despite the fierce enemy opposition the Allied soldiers penetrated the heart of the city and destroyed a six-gun shore-artillery battery, an ammunition dump, an antiaircraft battery and a radio-location station.

There had been six landings, one of them being a repulse, and the fighting raged over a front of fifteen miles. The Nazi coastal guns were never silenced. Four hundred Nazi defenders were killed or wounded. Berlin claimed to have taken 2,195 prisoners including 617 wounded Allied soldiers.

A large part of Dieppe was left in smoking ruins.

NOTED NAVIGATOR

Air actions at Rouen and Abbeville in support of the Dieppe raid brought particular notice to a much-publicized navigator credited with "firsts" against both Germany and Japan. He was Captain Theodore J. VAN KIRK, of North Cumberland, Pennsylvania, who charted the course of the lead Flying Fortress in the FIRST all-American bombing attack against Hitler's Western Europe on August 17, 1942. Three years later this captain navigated the B-29 which unloaded the FIRST atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan.

Almost two months earlier, Lieutenant Bernard L. BELL, of Chicago, Illinois, became the FIRST American bombardier to toggle a switch over Nazi Europe when a U. S. crew, flying in a British plane, raided Hazebrouck, France, on June 29.

FIGHTING FIRSTS
MARAUDER MASTERY

Air pioneering against the important freight yards at Abbeville was given a new twist almost at the halfway mark between Dieppe and D-day when Brigadier General (then Colonel) Herbert B. THATCHER, of Chevy Chase, Maryland and Worcester, Massachusetts, led the FIRST medium-level attack by Marauder bombers in Europe. He later became commander of a wing in the 9th Air Force Bomber Command.

The medium-bomber parade of attackers against Nazi-occupied France was highlighted by the many missions chalked up by Colonel (then Major) Wilson R. WOOD, of Chico, Texas, who made his European bow at Abbeville as pilot of the famed "Suzy Q." This was his third theater of operation. Off Jacksonville, Florida, he had demonstrated his accuracy, while on patrol duty, by sinking a U-boat. Transferred to Pacific Coast patrol, the major sank another submarine, but this time it was a Jap kill.

The Texan, who was a buck private three years before America became involved in the war, was promoted to colonel and commanded the FIRST group of Marauders to complete 100 raids. Following D-day, his outfit became the FIRST Allied bombardment group to operate from a French base since the Nazis had conquered the country in 1940.

Initial operations of Marauder planes were highly discouraging. The responsibility of adjustment fell mainly on the shoulders of Colonel Glenn C. NYE, of Raleigh, North Carolina. After a disastrous start, when ten of eleven planes failed to return to base, he put his force through ten weeks of practice to overcome the glaring deficiencies which had been exposed. Then he redeemed himself with a record of only four planes lost in 1,400 sorties.

The colonel's force, which became widely known as "Nye's Annihilators," was the FIRST Marauder group to operate from England. One of the most daring roles of the Annihilators was recorded in the early phases of the invasion of France, when these flyers attacking German installations

descended so low that some of their planes were damaged by their own bombs.

One of the Marauder flyers who helped to prove these bombers were much safer than first operations had indicated was Captain Paul SHANNON, of Attica, Kansas. He piloted the FIRST Marauder to complete fifty combat missions from Britain. His aircraft "Mild and Bitter" established a record for these planes by rounding out 75 missions without being damaged to any extent, and with no member of the crew wounded by enemy fire.

FLYING FORTRESSES

A flyers' flyer, rating top consideration for the aerial hall of fame was Major General Curtis E. (Ironpants) LEMAY, of Lakewood and Columbus, Ohio.

Called the best navigator in the air forces, his personal feats were well known when he blossomed forth into a great leader in such roles as commandship of the "Bomberang Boys," as wing leader in the FIRST shuttle-bombing flight of Fortresses from England to Africa, signaling the deepest penetration up to that time into Germany, as commander of the 20th and later the 21st Air Force, as boss of Superfortresses attacking the Jap homeland, and as leader of the outfit which dropped the FIRST atomic bomb.

When the Air Force wanted someone to carry out a particularly tough assignment, this general more often than not got the call.

While a colonel, he laid out both the North and South Atlantic Ferry routes. As a star navigator, he was responsible for hitting the Italian liner *REX* "on the nose" (navigationally), 800 miles from the seacoast.

Among the Ohioan's pre-invasion raids on France, some of the best-remembered were the Bomberang Boys' attacks on the Renault Works outside Paris.

Another navigator won the distinction of being the lead pathfinder in the FIRST shuttle-bombing raid from England to North Africa. He was Captain Emmanuel A. CASSI-

MATIS, of St. Louis, Missouri. On a subsequent mission after the bombing of Lille, France, he was seriously wounded but survived after the bombardier of this flack-riddled Fortress died in his arms.

Lieutenant Gordon L. WILLIAMS, of Fresno, California, was bombardier in the lead plane of his formation in the FIRST American strike at a target in the Paris area.

PILOTLESS PLANES

Forerunners of atom bombs—"death bombers"—made their FIRST strikes in Europe, with Nazi strongholds along the Pas de Calais, France, as the targets. A crack Flying Fortress group commanded by Colonel William DAVID, of Calhoun, Georgia, staged the mission. The "death bombers" were pitotless radio-operated B-17s crammed with deadly explosives.

"Nightmares of the air" were a common occurrence for Lieutenant Armand F. BURCH, of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Even before his rugged battle experiences, he had had a close call when he piloted the FIRST Fortress to leave the United States for England. He not only encountered severe storms but experienced a period of panic over his dwindling gasoline supply. When he landed in Britain, he had only five gallons left.

Far more bloodcurdling were Burch's missions. He came home each time from seventeen raids with his bomber so badly shot up it had to undergo repair. One of the worst hair-raisers was his mission to Villecoublay, France. However, the pilot always escaped injury.

Less than seven months after the Dieppe-area raid on Rouen, Lieutenant Lynn MOKLER, of Clearwater, California, was a participant in another attack on that stronghold. Two hundred and fifty persons were killed in the strike. Mokler was the FIRST pilot based in England to reach his 25th raid on Nazi-occupied Europe. He started his missions as he finished them, with an attack on Lorient, France.

Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) Herbert C. WANGEMAN, of Ventura, California, Fortress squadron leader, was the FIRST veteran pilot to go home from the European theater and return as a commander; and he led his group of bombers on their maiden trip in the Orleans-Bricy raid, in France.

The FIRST U. S. pilot to land a Fortress safely on one engine in the European theater was Lieutenant Immanuel KLETTE, of Rockville, Connecticut. The incident followed a raid on Villecoublay.

Major Howard L. NUSSBAUM, of New York City, an engineer, "canned" the fight talk of a Fortress in the FIRST use of a new device recording the sounds of battle and the conversation of the crew. He brought back an oral record of every detail of an hour's flight, including an attack on German airfields in France. The magnetic contraption was perfected to aid intelligence work.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PANORAMA

Principal source of the 8th Air Force's intelligence, the 7th Photographic Reconnaissance Group obtained at least 75 per cent of the information acquired by the Allies before their drive into France on D-day. Flying Spitfires and Lightnings, these "shutter bugs" completed around 1,000,000 photos in all of Europe before the war ended.

Under the command of Colonel James G. HALL, of Fort Worth, Texas, and Atlanta, Georgia, the group flew over Paris on the FIRST American photo mission over Nazi-occupied Europe, March 28, 1943. How the Allies cashed in on this work was revealed by the discovery of a plant producing half of the Germans' synthetic rubber. The photos made possible the factory's destruction by bombers.

Altogether the group turned out 360 miles of film nine inches wide, and furnished intelligence with 5,000,000 prints. Before the end of the French campaign the outfit set a record for one day with 26,000 pictures made on 58 mis-

sions. Colonel Hall set the transcontinental speed record in the United States in 1931. He was a fighter pilot in World War I, when he shot down three German planes.

Other pre-invasion highlights of aerial activity: The FIRST airplane and balloon pilot of the U. S. Army, Brigadier General Frank P. LAHM, of Mansfield, Ohio, served as chief of aviation with the First Army.

Flight Officer William E. DAVIS, of St. Louis, was the FIRST man from that Missouri city to die in World War II. He crashed in England while piloting an RAF plane.

Captain Charles D. LONDON, of Long Beach, California, was the FIRST Thunderbolt fighter pilot to become an ace.

BEACHHEAD BRIDLED

Arrival of D-day plus one brought the cheering news that the beachhead seemed secure.

Here began the second phase of the invasion of Normandy, France.

The objectives were: (1) the capture of Cherbourg, the city and key port needed to clinch Allied supremacy on the westernmost point of the designated offensive operations; and (2) the accumulation of ample forces and material to assure a breakout from the beachhead in the over-all plan to move in the direction of Germany.

The landing areas were cleared of the Germans, and on the next day the American troops were within 21 miles of Cherbourg. On the east the Canadians captured a dozen Normandy towns. By June 10, the Allied forces were merged and the American aggressors were one-third of the way across the Cherbourg Peninsula. The front extended for a distance of fifty miles. Isigny, Treviers, and Lison were captured.

The seizure of Carentan on June 12 also marked the beginning of the Battle of St. Georges-d'Elle.

Lieutenant James M. BIHLMIRE, of Three Oaks, Michigan, was the FIRST American decorated for heroic fighting

in the long and seesaw engagement to conquer the last-named town. Driven out of the enemy stronghold after fighting his way in with 69 men, Bihlmire returned to rescue twelve wounded Americans.

HEDGEROW HOPPERS

The Americans drove to within six miles of the Nazis' last escape corridor on June 16 when they captured St. Sauveur la Vicomte. For two days previously the Germans had counterattacked at both ends of the 100-mile beachhead. Although repulsed, the enemy regained Montebourg which had been captured June 13, but the latter city was retaken by the Americans on the day they stormed into St. Sauveur.

Fighting through hedgerows in the wake of streams of machine-gun fire leaving many Germans dead, the infantrymen bore down on St. Sauveur, a city badly battered by American artillery. Lieutenant Eugene DOERFLER, of Hays, Kansas, led the FIRST shock troops across Douve River which flows past the town. A unit commanded by Captain Clyde RUSSELL, of Iowa, was the FIRST to enter this highway hub. With the invasion twelve days old, the 9th Division virtually destroyed the Nazi 77th in signaling the cross-cut of Cotenin Peninsula.

CHERBOURG CAPTURED

The German defenders of Cherbourg found themselves enveloped in a pocket after a hectic day bringing many changes in the battle picture on June 20. The Americans began attacking the outer defenses of the great port city in their launching of a long-range siege, with the Nazis backed into hill defenses. A breakthrough across the base of the peninsula was accomplished by the 9th Division.

The sealing up of the enemy was made possible by the captures of Le Bourget, Eglise-de-Grenneville, and Valognes, the latter being the last large town in front of Cherbourg to fall.

This FIRST major siege operation by the Americans in Western Europe was under the direction of Lieutenant General (then Major General) Joseph Lawton COLLINS, of New Orleans, Louisiana, commander of the 7th Corps, who later captured Aschen, Germany, after a dash across Belgium.

Five days of furious fighting preceded the fall of Cherbourg on June 27. Units of the 79th Division, commanded by Major General Ira T. WYCHE, of Ocracoke and Pinehurst, North Carolina, were the FIRST to enter the port city. Afterwards the 79th turned southward to help two airborne divisions which had been holding the peninsula base line facing the Nazis on the south.

General Wyche's standing order to his troops was: "Close with the enemy and exterminate him." The general's division later attained the record for mileage on the Western Front of 1,400 miles of fighting in France.

PORT PRE-EMPTION

A huge Allied convoy which had been waiting for the fall of Cherbourg rushed in from its English Channel position to launch the work of repairing dock facilities and removing sunken ships. Captain Norman S. IVES, of Galesburg, Illinois, became the FIRST Allied naval officer to be made director of a captured port after the invasion of Western Europe. Less than a month after his appointment at Cherbourg, the captain was killed in action when the Germans ambushed a convoy of motor vehicles near Granville.

Before the war this naval officer had played a major role in developing safety devices which saved the lives of many crewmen serving on submarines.

The harbor at Cherbourg was so badly damaged that it was of little use for weeks. However, troops were brought into the port, including the 104th (Timberwolves) Division under the command of Major General Terry (Terrible Terry) ALLEN, of El Paso, Texas, and a native of Ft. Douglas, Utah. This courageous fighting unit was the FIRST

American division to be shipped from the United States directly to Cherbourg and became a spark plug in performance during the early French campaign. General Allen was a veteran of the African and Sicilian drives, and after France continued as a spearheader in action on the Holland-Belgium front and in Germany.

HURRICANE HANDICAP

Bad weather conditions were a serious drawback to the Allies in the first weeks of the French campaign. Proceedings were slowed down by the tremendous opposition of the enemy in the Caen sector, where the British and Canadians operated.

The stormy period reached a climax when a hurricane struck and stopped landing activities on the beaches for four days, June 19-22.

Lieutenant Commander Henry B. LEITMAN, of New York City, was awarded the FIRST of the new Merchant Marine Meritorious Service Medals for his direction of a lifeboat during one of the above-mentioned storms. His resourcefulness saved the lives of six soldiers. Leitman was then chief mate of the Liberty ship *WILLIAM TYLER*, and at 23 became one of the youngest men holding a master's license in the U. S. Maritime Service.

The unobliging weather also handicapped aerial activities, the ground troops being held to minimum advances because of the lack of adequate support from the air.

There were bright spots, however, in the limited aerial endeavors. Flight Officer Clement M. LANCASTER, of Rural Hall, North Carolina, was pilot of the FIRST glider to be picked up by a C-47 sky train in a new technique developed by the Troop Carrier Command. This occurred on the Normandy beachhead.

Commander of the FIRST American armored signal battalion to go into action, Lieutenant Colonel William B. LATTA, of El Paso, Texas, set a fast pace during the first week of the invasion when his outfit laid more than 200

miles of copper wire and 100 miles of four-spiral cable. This signal-corps force had experienced its baptism of fire in the preceding year while providing communications for the army of General Patton in Sicily.

Captain Walter C. HERGERT, of Syracuse, New York, and Kearny, New Jersey, commanded the FIRST bakery outfit to arrive in France, on June 29, and the unit was also the FIRST one instituted in World War I, having turned out ten tons of bread a day for American soldiers in the initial 100 days in Europe in World War II.

The FIRST refugee camp for bombed and shelled-out French and homeless Poles, Italians, and Spaniards established in Normandy was operated by Major Carroll H. LEWIS, of Cincinnati, Ohio, public-welfare officer of the Civil Affairs Staff of the 1st Army.

Private Frank D. JOSEPH, of Ashland, Ohio, infantryman, was awarded the Croix de Guerre, and the action for which he was decorated was the FIRST resulting in citation by the French for Americans in the war.

TEMPORARY TRUCE

Despite the appearance of a stalemate in the over-all campaign in Normandy, on the arrival of July, the Allies had captured nearly 100 towns at the end of the first month of the invasion.

Major Quentin (Cue) ROOSEVELT, of Oyster Bay, New York, grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt, supplied a diversionary touch as an aftermath of Cherbourg. He was the officer in charge when for the FIRST time German women were returned to the Nazis without the process of exchange. Eight nurses captured in a hospital were turned over to the foe.

During the no-man's-land truce, all hostilities ceased for thirty minutes on the front in the Balleroy area. There was a similar procedure seven days later at Caumont on July 9, when another group of eight nurses were handed back to the enemy. Major Roosevelt, a liaison officer for an artil-

lery unit, was wounded during a Nazi raid in Tunisia, North Africa, seventeen months before his Normandy activities.

VIRE VICTORY

A battle of the marshes developed the first week of July when the Americans drove to the eventual seizure of the town of St. Jean de Daye. The operation resulted in the providential straightening out of a bulge which had developed in our lines north of vital St. Lo-d'Ourville.

Crossing of the Vire River was a "must" on the Allies' agenda. Sergeant Harold MERZ, of West New York, New Jersey, member of a patrol, was the FIRST American to swim the stream under fire.

The engineers took doughboys with them in assault boats as part of the plan to cross the river and commence the building of four bridges. The feat was accomplished in six hours. A friendly smoke screen aided the operation although the engineers were under enemy attack.

Captain James R. WINTERS, of California, commanded the assault boats which took the FIRST waves of engineers across on July 7.

St. Jean, a road junction important to the Germans, was captured on the following day. American tanks smashed their way to a three-mile advance. By noon our troops were astride the main road between St. Jean and St. Lo.

MAJOR MOVE

For approximately ten days in July, Bradley and Eisenhower concentrated their operations on the single major objective of forcing the enemy out of St. Lo. Until this was accomplished there could be no end to the American Battle of the Beachhead. Until then there was no chance of a rousing breakthrough to permit a dash eastward through France in pursuit of the Nazis.

Pont-Hébert, three miles north of St. Lo, was captured on the 11th, two days after the British and Canadians had

gained control of vital Caen on the extreme east of the beachhead, after 34 days of bitter fighting. Thus the stage was set for an all-out offensive by the Americans to the southeast.

Pont-Hébert was one of the ten villages seized on that day by the U. S. invaders. Ripping through crack Nazi units, the First Army plunged ahead three and a half miles, surrounding the enemy on three sides of St. Lo and conquering heights dominating that provincial capital.

One of the gloomiest situations confronting the attackers was the annoying hedgerows of this *bocage* country. They formed such a complicated network that tanks could not make any headway through them.

Providentially, the problem was solved by a member of the 102d Cavalry Squadron, Sergeant Curtis G. CULIN, 3d, of Cranford, New Jersey. His FIRST revolutionary invention in connection with this brand of warfare played a big part in the eventual St. Lo breakthrough. The "Rhine tank" which he developed was equipped with two scythe-like blades of steel which cut through the hedges and earth satisfactorily and with safety.

FRAGILE FRONT

The all-out offensive against St. Lo began on July 11. Previously, however, Bradley's army had been edging closer to its goal. As early as June 12, the American capture of the forest of Cerisy had been hailed in dispatches as "a drive on St. Lo." Five days later, the 9th Infantry Division teamed up with the 82d Airborne to pound within a mile of the prize city. Assistant commander of this last-named outfit was Major General (then Brigadier General) James M. GAVIN, of Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania. A strategic height known as Hill 192 was occupied by some of these forces on the following day, but the troops were pulled out soon after this premature action and the towering man-made fortress was not occupied again until 23 days later, when the Battle of St. Lo actually began.

General Gavin, who was later put in full command of the 82d Airborne, was decorated while in France for leading his paratroopers in a frontal attack on strong Nazi positions and exposing himself in a wheat field while under continuous fire from enemy machine guns in Normandy. His unit was the FIRST airborne outfit to go on four paratroop missions—in Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and Holland. He later was the FIRST to land in the jump of paratroopers into Berlin when his division assumed the task of guarding the American occupation zone there, though he shared the honor with a colonel.

GERMANS GIVE GROUND

Artillery shelling and plane bombings had reduced St. Lo to a rubble by July 14. The Americans commanded all roads into the town. The Germans put up a great fight for many days but began to weaken perceptibly on the 15th. One of the spearheaders in the American surge was Major General Leland S. HOBBS, of Rutledge, Pennsylvania, and a native of Gloucester, Massachusetts, commander of the 30th Infantry Division known as "Roosevelt's Shock Troops." Later his force teamed with the 2nd Armored Division in breaching the Siegfried Line, and his was the FIRST infantry division to enter Belgium.

This fifth day of heavy battle, on the 15th, marked an advance of four miles, and in 24 hours the First Army seized sixteen towns and villages.

Private Archie E. BOWEN, of St. Louis, Missouri, was the FIRST scout of a rifle platoon to cross an open field in the face of Nazi sniper and machine-gun fire and fought his way to within high ground before St. Lo. He was afterwards wounded.

Another valiant St. Lo battler was Brigadier General (then Colonel) Butler B. MILTONBERGER, of North Platte, Nebraska. Commander of a regiment, he acted jointly with another outfit in making a two-pronged squeeze on the city during the long siege.

The Nebraskan's units cleaned out approaches to permit the entry of an armored column. Miltonberger was the FIRST officer to receive a field promotion to a rank of general in the European theater.

CAPITAL CAPTURED

The turning point in the drive of the doughboys reached a climax on the early morning of the 17th, when the Americans, moving noiselessly across hedgerows, bayoneted the foe in foxholes and then blasted the defenders, caught unawares, with grenades.

The outskirts of the city were reached. Fighting raged in the streets. The penetration from the east was made largely by the 29th (Blue and Gray) Infantry Division commanded by Major General Charles H. GERHARDT, of Macon, Georgia, and a native of Tennessee. The general's outfit was credited with playing the key role in the victorious proceedings in the provincial capital during this and the succeeding day. Gerhardt's division later captured Muenchen-Gladbach, the FIRST city in the Ruhr Valley to fall to the Allied Army, in March of the following year.

The first troops entered the city proper on the morning of the 18th. Lieutenant Glover S. JOHNS, of Corpus Christi, Texas, led the FIRST unit to fight its way through the entire city. He commanded the "Indestructible Clay Pigeons," so named because it was always out in front and exposed to hostile fire.

St. Lo was completely cleared of the Nazis on the next day, the 19th. The fall of the key city coincided with a breakthrough by the British and Canadians in the Caen area.

Among the soldiers left in the St. Lo sector behind the quickly shifting battlefront was Lieutenant Lee DALE, of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. He gained the distinction of being chief of the FIRST mobile Army post office in Europe, having converted a captured Nazi caravan truck into a postal station.

The breakthrough from the rolling hedgerow terrain to the plains of northern France was a ponderous undertaking during the first 24 hours of fighting under adverse weather conditions. But on the second day, July 26, the thrusts to loosen the German grip on the country became a rapid sweep in the direction of Brittany. The furious offensive clicked thunderously with close support between planes, infantry, and armored forces.

Outstanding in aerial endeavor was the performance of fighter-bombers commanded by Major General Elwood R. (Pete) QUESADA, of Washington, D. C., who one week after D-day greeted the FIRST squadron to land in France. During the drive carrying Americans into Brittany, this general's flyers destroyed or damaged 3,562 Nazi tanks, tracked vehicles, and motor transport.

Air attacks were especially costly to the enemy at the beginning of the new offensive, when 1,500 heavy bombers and hundreds of other aircraft unloaded 3,390 tons of bombs on hostile positions. The experiment in carpet, or area bombing, as an integral part of a ground offensive paid off as one of the best blasting jobs of the war.

During a gigantic bombardment on July 25, Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNAIR, of Verndale, California, was killed by a misdirected American bomb. He was observing the attack when the bomb dropped 10,000 yards short of the target. He was the FIRST American lieutenant general to be killed in action.

Another fatality of moment occurred on the following day. Lieutenant James B. MANNING, of Oak Park, Illinois, the FIRST man to be inducted into the U. S. Army under selective service (November 18, 1941), was killed by a piece of shrapnel near Cherbourg.

NAZIS NULLIFIED

The main task of the First Army was to get behind the Germans to cut off their escape. This objective was partly realized when a large number of the enemy were trapped July 28 on the outskirts of Contances, which fell the next day.

Armored troops went into action for the first time on the 27th. Hundreds of tanks and armed vehicles were hurled at the Nazis by the force which included the 2d Armored Division. Fighting with this outfit was Major General (then Brigadier General) Isaac D. WHITE, of Des Moines, Iowa, and a native of Petersboro, New Hampshire, later commander of the same division. He gained wide notice in the following year when he became the FIRST invading general to cross the Elbe River since Napoleon accomplished the feat.

The 2d Armored thrust in its first two days of battle in France imposed a ring from Canisy to Brehal, thwarting any attempt at escape by the enemy. On the same day, the 29th, Americans captured not only Coutances, thirteen miles south of St. Lo, but Lengronne and St. Denis le Gast as well.

Near the last-named town, the chief clerk of a headquarters unit became the FIRST soldier in his division to win the Distinguished Service Cross. He was Sergeant William KOLOSKY, of Chicago, Illinois. Although his associates were untrained for combat, the Illinoisan rallied a battle line of clerks, draftsmen, radio operators, interpreters, messengers, and orderlies who amazingly repelled an attack of a German column of more than 600 men and ten tanks.

Kolosky assigned his hurriedly assembled contingent to machine guns and bazookas. The small but hefty "army" forced the foe's withdrawal. On the following day this same collection of Jerries was wiped out by artillery fire. Another, later killed in action, who distinguished himself at St. Denis le Gast was Captain Charles BERRA, of St. Louis, Missouri. The FIRST recent graduate of West Point taking a major

role in the French plains fighting, he led his infantry company in a stand in the town described as "climaxing the Nazis' will to fight."

JERRY JACKPOT

With the offensive just a week old, the Americans hit the jackpot in the capture of Avranches. Brehal was also liberated on the 31st, and this operation brought distinction to Captain Donald L. TILLMAN, of Milbank, South Dakota, when he led the FIRST outfit to enter the town. His men were in the thick of street fighting forced by stubborn enemy defenders.

The threat of a break into the interior of France became a reality on the closing day of July when the Nazis were forced to yield Avranches, side door to the Brittany Peninsula. The First Army had ripped southward to the base of the peninsula, reached the sea on the west, fought through a troublesome bottleneck, and parked perilously behind the enemy forces.

The way was open to strike south and west across Brittany's Brest Peninsula and east in the direction of Paris, a distance of 160 miles.

The following events were among other sidelights of the Normandy campaign: Private Curtis THOMPSON, of New Haven, Connecticut, was at the throttle of a locomotive in the opening of the FIRST stretch of Allied-held and American-operated railroad in France. In charge of the unit of the transportation corps in this FIRST event of its kind was Lieutenant Colonel Ralph JANSEN, of Maywood, Illinois.

The FIRST blinded veteran of the war to earn an insurance salesman's certificate in Connecticut was Sergeant John A. WELLS, of Racine, Wisconsin. A medical corpsman, he lost his sight a month after D-day when a jeep in which he was a passenger struck a Nazi land mine.

Sergeant Nancy CARTER, of Charlottesville, Virginia, was the FIRST Wac to set foot on French soil. The FIRST Wac in France to be awarded the bronze star was Lieutenant

Elizabeth P. HOISINGTON, of Spokane, Washington. Commander of the FIRST Wacs to arrive was Captain Isabel KANE, of Tacoma, Washington.

CHAPTER 8

FIRST DOUBLE-HEADER INVASION OF THE CONTINENT

Eisenhower had a card up his sleeve, it was revealed one week after the Normandy breakthrough, and the ace he produced was known at the time as "General X."

The news was finally allowed to trickle out that the villain in this knock-down-and-dragout military drama was none other than General George S. PATTON, Jr., of San Gabriel, California.

The Nazis soon learned they were at grips with the outstanding tank commander of the war. Captor of Casablanca and Gafsa in North Africa, and a key campaign manager in the conquest of Sicily, Patton made history in a record-breaking drive across France.

Brought into battle August 1 when Avranches fell into American hands, the general led his troops westward in the FIRST Allied incursion into Brittany. His 3d Army, which eventually became the last major fighting organization to see action on the Western Front, was the most powerful single army in United States military annals, composed of four corps of eighteen divisions, six of them armored and twelve in the infantry classification.

ENEMY ENCIRCLED

Bradley's 12th Group, in conjunction with the British and Canadians moving out of the Caen sector, attained a complete encirclement of the enemy with General Courtney

Hodges, now commander of the First Army—in charge of the left flank and Patton on the right.

One of the great heroes of the Avranches operation was a legendary sharpshooter, Sergeant John R. MORTON, of Boonville, Missouri. He was the FIRST living soldier in the 6th Armored Division to receive the Distinguished Service Cross as a result of killing 14 Germans in one crowded hour. Serving as crew chief of a wireless halftrack, he also bagged three prisoners. In later fighting on the Metz-Nancy front Morton increased his score of Nazis killed to 29.

The FIRST doughboy to set foot on the island of Mont St. Michel was Private Brougher FREEMAN, of Jerome, Pennsylvania, when he drove a jeep from the mainland of France across a causeway. This was shortly after the enemy had abandoned Avranches.

DARING DOUGHBOY

In the space of two days the 3d Army smashed ahead from Avranches for a distance of forty miles to capture Rennes, the ancient capital of Brittany.

FIRST to contact the Germans defending that city was a tank outfit commanded by Lieutenant Colonel William (Wild Bill) BAILEY, of Danville, Virginia. His men closed one side of the trap clamped on the enemy.

Despite their hopeless outlook, the Nazis elected to carry on a suicidal fight. Their stubbornness was demonstrated when a daring doughboy attempted a one-man coup to get the enemy to surrender. The American carrying out the voluntary operation—the FIRST truce to be achieved in the fighting in the heart of Brittany—was Private Donald L. McKAY, of Grand Island, Nebraska.

When the 29-year-old soldier became lost from his outfit, he barged into some Germans and obtained an interview with the enemy commander in the sector. He made two trips blindfolded to induce a surrender, taking an interpreter with him on the last contact.

The soldier had no luck in his truce negotiations but was fortunate in another respect when he started fighting. He killed six Nazis and captured 28 others in a two-day span.

BRETON BATTLES

The Americans stormed into the outer edge of the great port of Brest on August 5, but many days passed before the Jerries yielded the city. The thrust engulfed the Breton Peninsula, cracking the defenses leading to four other vital ports.

At this point it became evident that reports of the existence of a network of almost impenetrable German inner-command forts were unfounded. There was the drawback, however, of nearly fanatical German resistance wherever they elected to take a stand.

The early hostilities at Brest brought death to Corporal Joseph H. BROGGER, of St. Louis, Missouri. He was the FIRST member of Battery A of the 128th Field Artillery Battalion to be killed before that city.

GALLOPING GIs

Bradley's juggernaut began wheeling around on August 6, driving pronglike to the east in the race to get to the heart of France. The first major result was the capture, August 9, of Le Mans, southwestern gateway to Paris, 110 miles beyond.

The FIRST troops to enter the important railway and auto-manufacturing center were led by Lieutenant Colonel John HOMFELD, of Urbana, Illinois.

The doughboys' galloping incursion followed the destruction of a mile-long German column racing to the defense of the city the night before.

To the northwest, on the same day, Americans captured the sea-fortress city of St. Malo, near the junction of the Cherbourg and Brittany Peninsulas. The main citadel of the

harbor, however, held out for some days because of the obstinacy of the "mad colonel," Andreas von Aulock.

The FIRST assault on the rocky stronghold was led by Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) John SPEEDIE, of San Antonio, Texas. The FIRST storming force to clear the approaching streets was commanded by Lieutenant John J. WARKOWITZ, of Carteret, New Jersey.

Von Aulock had ordered his holdout garrison to defend the fort "to the last man." The stronghold had never been captured prior to the American onslaught, although it was the scene of many sieges in the Middle Ages.

PATTON'S PURSUIT

"The Battle for Paris" was begun in earnest by the middle of the month when the doughboys were within a few miles of Chartres, the cathedral city. Spearheading Americans captured the last-named stronghold on the 16th after a seven-hour engagement. Lieutenant Colonel Leslie ALLISON, of Paris, Kentucky, led the FIRST troops to face the enemy here.

Paris, France, was only 43 miles away.

About this time the so-called Falaise Pocket began jelling, to the advantage of the Allies. The British drove out of the north from Caen. It was a pincers movement in which many divisions of the enemy were engulfed with Patton's crushing spearheaders providing pressure from the south. The jaws of the trap were closed on August 11. Upwards of 100,000 of the Nazis were captured.

Now it was a race to the Seine River along the route of the narrow German escape corridor north of a 100-mile-wide ring of steel imposed by Patton and curving north and east from captured Orleans.

FIGHTING FIRSTS SEINE STEPPINGSTONE

Driving almost to the northwest suburbs of Paris, the armored forces were threatening to box off the retreating Germans and compelling their crossing of the bridgeless Seine.

Lieutenant Colonel Theodore JAKIM, of Chicago, Illinois, commanded combat engineers who built the FIRST American bridge over the Seine, on August 19, near Mantes. Leader of the supporting infantrymen was Lieutenant Colonel A. C. DOHRMANN, of Seward and Lincoln, Nebraska.

The FIRST armored division of Eisenhower's command to cross the Seine was the 7th Division led by Major General Robert W. HASBROUCK, of Washington, D. C. and Kingston, New York. The dash was accomplished at Tilly on the 22d. Later, the general's forces were the FIRST to strike at Metz and the FIRST to cross the Moselle River in conjunction with the 5th Infantry, on September 8.

Proceeding ahead of the entire American Army, Lieutenant Harry A. MORRIS, of Kansas City, Missouri, was the FIRST soldier to enter the town of Nogent-le-Rotrou directly after its capture by French resistance units. This occurred while the first American reconnaissance elements were probing into the outskirts of Paris. Morris joined in repulsing a Nazi counterattack on the town.

ORLEANS ORDEAL

Within view of the statue of Joan of Arc at historical Orleans occurred a typical encounter during the flight of Nazis to their own frontier. The FIRST Americans inside the town were in time to participate in a street battle of 25 French patriots against the last enemy units headed southward across the Loire River.

Among the four Yankees who preceded the infantry into the place was Lieutenant Colonel (then Captain) George L. SCHNEIDER, of Brooklyn, New York, a civil-affairs officer. He teamed up with another captain and two enlisted men in

the battle lasting more than three hours, on August 16. One hundred and fifty Germans were killed or wounded. Later Schneider was military governor of Lintfort, Germany, and restored operations in the biggest coal mine in that country.

Captain Lawrence W. BRADY, of Los Angeles, California, became the FIRST American casualty in the Orleans operations, suffering leg wounds.

The FIRST doughboys entering the city, who completed the quartet of battlers, were Sergeant Francis J. HARRINGTON, of Troy, New York, and Corporal Paul D. BAHR, of Salt Lake City, Utah.

PARIS PANDEMONIUM

Four years of German tyranny were ended in Paris in the liberation of that city by the Allies on August 25.

Acting ahead of schedule, trigger-happy French patriots numbering 50,000 began fighting the Nazi garrison there four days earlier.

At this exact time Patton's eager beavers had extended their armored claws to within 25 miles of the French metropolis.

The business of mauling the enemy had not reached the climax to justify a smash into the city when the underground hordes staged their premature curtain-raiser.

However, the die had been cast, and an all-out advance was ordered. General Jacques Le Clerc's French forces were sent in first.

The 4th (Ivy Leaf) Infantry Division, commanded by Major General Raymond O. BARTON, of Ada, Oklahoma, and a native of Colorado, was the FIRST U. S. Army contingent to march into Paris. The same aggregation later became the FIRST division to penetrate Germany through the Siegfried Line. General Barton was also credited by General Patton with "saving the city of Luxembourg" during the December fighting later in the year.

FIGHTING FIRSTS WEHRMACHT WINDUP

Emotional outbursts of the inhabitants bringing cheers and tears on liberation day were frequently supplanted by screams of terror reminiscent of the dangers attending the long rule of the Wehrmacht. Die-hard snipers were having their own Roman holiday, in defiance of the German surrender agreement.

These were the scenes confronting Captain Sacha La BOLLAS, of Glendora and Los Angeles, California, driver of the FIRST American vehicle to enter Paris. A native of the French metropolis, he had his first view of the city in 17 years, being a member of the 9th Air Force public-relations staff.

With most food supplies shut off, the people were considered within three days of actual famine.

Whistling bullets from snipers' nests on rooftops ceased in less than 48 hours after several fatalities and less than twenty other casualties.

The pilot of the FIRST Cub plane to fly over Paris after the liberation was Major Jerome BYRD, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

AUGUST ADVANCES

The 1st and 3d Armies were proceeding at a breakneck pace in the direction of Germany by August 25, and Belgium and Luxembourg as well. The nearest troops were then 150 miles from the Reich border, and six days later ten miles from Belgium.

The capture of Troyes, a highway and rail center, was part of a flank movement in a drive north and east which served as a menace to the retreating enemy. The highly regarded 4th Armored Division, commanded by Major General John S. (Tiger Jack) WOOD, of Little Rock, Arkansas and Narberth, Pennsylvania, was a spearheader in the operations through the last-named town.

This general's outfit later broke the Germans' Moselle

River line with the aid of the 35th and 80th Infantry Divisions, in the FIRST crossing of that stream. General Wood was decorated for flying in Cub observation planes under fire while directing ground forces. In two months his forces captured 15,000 prisoners, killed 5,000 more, and defeated elements of eighteen divisions.

By the time Patton's army marched into Château-Thierry on the 28th, the general had captured 65,000 and killed 16,000 Nazis after starting his drive in Brittany.

A plunge was taken across the Meuse River on the 31st, when immortal Verdun, one of the keystones of the French Maginot Line, was captured. The Nazis staged only brief and weak opposition. Two forces of armored troops, going in at two points at the same time, were the FIRST to battle into the city, being led by two southerners, Lieutenant Colonel Marshall WALLACH, of Warrenton, Virginia, and Lieutenant Colonel Edward McCONNELL, of Paxton, North Carolina. Celebrated Argonne Forest was penetrated on the same day.

The Americans linked Verdun and Rheims in 24 hours, a feat which had taken the Allies four years to accomplish in the preceding World War.

AIRFIELD ACQUISITIONS

Sixty-five German airfields were captured by the Allies during the first two months of their invasion in northern France. During August fighter planes alone damaged or destroyed 14,750 railroad cars. The heavier aircraft dropped 75,000 tons of bombs on the defending Nazi forces.

A Piper Cub pilot who won fame for his daredevil operations was Major Charles (Bazooka Charley) CARPENTER, of Moline, Illinois. He was the FIRST flyer to land at the inland port of Quimperle, in Brittany. One of his outstanding feats was to destroy a German outpost holding up an Allied armored column with mortar fire.

Carpenter landed and borrowed a tank. Mounting himself and six infantry volunteers, he advanced and drove the

enemy outpost into submission. This airman became the FIRST "puddle jumper" to knock out two German tanks while shooting with bazookas attached to the wings of his tiny aircraft, diving down and firing six shells in Alsace-Lorraine. He was credited with being a tank "ace" when he knocked out his fifth enemy tank with his bazookas.

Night fighter planes began operating in France during August. Lieutenant Colonel Oris B. JOHNSON, of Natchitoches, Louisiana, was commander of the FIRST group of Black Widow after-dark craft to go into the air. His outfit eliminated eleven German planes and sixteen locomotives and knocked down five buzz bombs, later compiling a record of 28 Nazi planes destroyed.

A French bridge the retreating Jerries didn't cross when they reached the Loire River was the one destroyed by a group of Liberators commanded by Colonel Luther J. FAIRBANKS, of Burt, Iowa. In the FIRST low-level bombing ever carried out by four-engine bombers based in England, his crews made the bridge useless in hits attained from a height of 6,500 feet, near Blois, France. The group's FIRST of 100 missions set a record for distance in Europe when a heavy attack was made on Berlin. All told, Fairbanks' outfit dropped 4,000 tons of explosives on enemy installations.

FOURTH FRONT

The clincher that assured freedom once more for France was delivered by the Allies when they landed on the Riviera beaches, the great Mediterranean playground, on August 15, 1944.

The haphazard resistance by the enemy ground units and their weak defense in the air furnished the tip-off that Hitler was concerned now principally with the consolidation of his forces on homeland soil.

The operation marked the FIRST time in history that Anglo-American forces had combined to stage two invasions in a single country on the European continent from both the north and the south.

The Fourth Front was launched with over-all command entrusted to British General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, Allied Mediterranean commander, although most of the ground fighting was by American and French units. In tactical charge was General Jacob L. DEVERS, of York, Pennsylvania, who in the closing stages of the war held the southern flank of the American line in Europe.

America's new drive was under the banner of the 7th Army, led by Lieutenant General Alexander M. (Sandy Pat) PATCH, Jr., of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and a native of Fort Huachuca, Arizona, veteran campaigner against the Japs in the Solomons.

Patch's mainstay in the southern invasion was the 6th Corps, under command of Lieutenant General Lucien K. TRUSCOTT, Jr., of Charlottesville, Virginia, Commando leader in the U. S. Rangers' FIRST operation in Europe at Dieppe, two years previously.

NAVY NARRATIVE

Eight hundred warships of eight nations began their D-day chores at daylight in resounding fashion. Cruisers and battleships poured shells and rockets into enemy shore installations.

The greatest fleet ever assembled in the Mediterranean remained in position while landing boats disgorged the troops. This momentous project was initiated at 7:30 A.M.

The imposing armada of ships was under the direction of Admiral Henry Kent HEWITT, of Hackensack, New Jersey. He previously had furnished Navy support in the North African and Italian invasions, and was in charge of American sea operations in the Sicilian onslaught, a record amphibious expedition up to that time, and the FIRST to be attempted in European waters. Rear Admiral Frank J. LOWRY, of Cresco, Iowa, and Cresson, Texas, spearheaded the U. S. attack while aboard a Coast Guard combat cutter.

The FIRST Navy contingent ashore at St. Tropez was commanded by Lieutenant Worth WALKER, of Elon Col-

lege, North Carolina. This heavy beach party was followed at once by demolition experts.

Walker served as D-day beachmaster, a traffic-directing role patterned after similar dangerous stints in invasions of Sicily and Italy.

Only one American landing ship was lost in the invasion, an LST sent to the bottom by enemy air attackers.

COMMANDO CHARGE

British-American airborne troops struck the first land blows in southern France. They preceded the sea-borne combatants by more than six hours, landing inland and jumping astride the Argens River, west of St. Raphael. Their objective was the seizure of vital road junctions and bridges, and they secured the pass through which troops from landing boats poured after daylight.

The leader of this Special Service Force was Major General Robert T. FREDERICK, of San Francisco, California, who earlier had spearheaded the FIRST unit of troops to reach Rome in the Italian invasion.

These Commandos landed at Le Miton and soon captured Le Muy, where there was wild street fighting.

An hour later the FIRST sea-borne tank crawled into town under the guidance of Lieutenant William DURNING, of North Olmsted, Ohio, platoon leader.

Pilot of the lead carrier plane of a giant flight of transports depositing the FIRST parachutists was Lieutenant Colonel Donald FRENCH, of Astoria, Oregon.

The FIRST plane to fly over the invasion area was a transport commanded and piloted by Lieutenant Colonel Joel L. CROUCH, of Riverside, California.

Lieutenant Colonel Raymond CATO, of Spurgeon, Indiana, led the FIRST troops into action.

BRIDGE BLASTERS

A great contributor to the success of D-day on the Riviera was the 12th Tactical Air Command under the leadership of Brigadier General Gordon P. SAVILLE, of Orlando and Winter Park, Florida.

The whole beachhead area was blasted to a depth of fifteen miles by the bombers of the air force assigned to soften up the enemy in collaboration with the shelling Navy ships. The air contingents directed by the general were in reality the FIRST elements of the invasion force to go into action.

For three days prior to the landings the aerial operators pounded the area unmercifully; knocked out many defenses; and climaxed their job with heavy blasting in the three hours preceding H-hour.

Liberators and Fortresses, escorted by around 1,000 fighter planes, knocked out every railroad bridge across the Rhone River below Valence.

More than 14,000 pilots and crew members saw aerial action on D-day, not including those engaged in airborne operations.

Lieutenant Howard D. DANKS, of Chicago, Illinois, a Thunderbolt pilot, was the FIRST Army flyer to land on the beachhead.

The FIRST Navy airman to do this was Lieutenant Stanley F. FIERSTEIN, of Houston, Texas. He was forced to alight on an unreadied field when he found it necessary to make a mechanical adjustment.

MORNING MAELSTROM

Beach-landing operations were confined to a coastal strip extending for more than 100 miles between Marseilles and Nice. St. Raphael was the "hot spot" of the first day's series of engagements. Here one of several forces of Americans was driven back and had to retire.

Propelled into this maelstrom of determined enemy resistance was Major General John E. DAHLQUIST, of St. Paul, Minnesota, and a native of Minneapolis. He was one of the FIRST two-star generals to land, arriving on the beachhead two hours after the first assault waves.

Dahlquist's 36th (Texas) Division hit the shore not far from the point where Napoleon landed when he returned from his Elba exile. For the FIRST time in any invasion, a large town was attacked frontally as a beachhead.

This same 36th had been the FIRST division ashore in the invasion of Italy.

St. Raphael was found too tough a nut to crack in this sort of operation, however. The frontal assault was turned back. Another regiment then tore into the side of the town, and that brought capitulation. This battle was fought before jeeps or other vehicles arrived.

Three regiments smashed inland almost half a mile, fighting through Nazi defenses. In the first two days of combat Dahlquist's 36th gathered in more than 4,000 prisoners.

THUNDERBIRD TEAMWORK

The eventual objective of the landing forces was the linking up with the Allied armies in Normandy pushing toward Germany. First, however, the plans called for a thrust through the Rhone Valley up which the Germans were retreating from the southern beachhead. A head start was made in the first 24 hours into the valleys of the Maritime Alps.

On D-day plus 1, the invaders were firmly established on the beachhead between Cannes and Toulon and were ten miles inland. Teaming up with General Dahlquist's 36th was the 45th (Thunderbirds) Infantry Division commanded by Major General William W. EAGLES, of Albion, Indiana and San Antonio, Texas. Most of the general's actions were veiled in secrecy until the Americans were well along toward Germany. Eagles was the FIRST of the generals in

southern France to be wounded to the extent of being withdrawn from battle. This happened when his jeep hit a mine.

BUTLER BRIGADIERS

All the beachheads had been secured by the 28th. Cannes and Nice fell to Frederick's raiders.

Earlier, while operating ahead of the main body of troops, the brigade of Brigadier General Frederick Bates BUTLER, of San Francisco, California, captured the town of Gap on the 20th, and Grenoble, an important communications center of 100,000 population, 140 miles north of the Mediterranean landing points, on the 23d.

This dash of "Task Force Butler's Flying Column" through the Alps had much to do with the rapid advance of the main force of the 6th Corps up the Rhone Valley. The general's armored brigade had been the FIRST unit to head northward on D-day.

Butler also specialized in captured German garrisons. His aggregation inflicted heavy punishment on at least one outfit of 15,000 Nazis.

Aix-en-Provence was captured two days before the intrusion at Grenoble. Captain M. B. ETHRIDGE, of Huntsville, Texas, led the FIRST troops into the first-named city. He teamed up with Captain R. B. PRIDGIN, of Henderson, North Carolina, in the operation. Aix was the hub of a network of highways north from Toulon and Marseilles (seized by French forces on the 23d). The fall of the city cut off vital Nazi supply and withdrawal routes.

O'DANIEL OVERHAULS OPPONENTS

Coming up behind the spearheading tank force of General Butler late in August, the "Gypsy Troops" of the 3d Infantry (Rock of the Marne) Division commanded by Major General John W. (Iron Mike) O'DANIEL, of Newark, Delaware and Atlanta, Georgia, teamed up with the

outfit ahead of them in inflicting serious losses to the enemy at Montelimar. Here the last-named general's forces ambushed a column of 2,000 Nazi vehicles twelve miles long, putting all out of commission, killing 900 and taking 900 prisoners.

These Rhone Valley reverses of the enemy included the capture of the sixth German general to be taken in the southern invasion. The fall of Montelimar on the 29th occurred on the same day the Nazi garrison surrendered at Toulon, more than 100 miles to the south on the Mediterranean.

General O'Daniel, one of the best-loved officers in the Army, participated in four invasions against the Germans, and in the fall of 1944 his outfit had been in the front line for almost 300 days, accounting for his nickname "Iron Mike." His division suffered more casualties than any other similar unit in European fighting. Thirty-two of his men were awarded the Medal of Honor. The 3d was the FIRST infantry division to win the Presidential unit citation.

MARTYR MAXWELL

"Iron Mike's" forces were in the thick of the fighting in the opening round of the battle for Belfort Gap, gateway to southwestern Germany and twenty miles away from the Rhine.

The stage was set for the storming of American troops up the Doubs Valley "road to the Reich" when the never lagging doughboys captured Besançon, a little one-street town with a big influence on the destinies of the invaders. There were three highways leading into the place, providing withdrawal routes for the enemy.

One of the epics of the war, from a standpoint of individual heroism, occurred outside Besançon. The star performer was Corporal Robert D. MAXWELL, of Cottage Grove, Oregon and Bellvue, Colorado, a communications linesman. An enemy-tossed grenade landed in a courtyard in front of five men fighting an unequal though successful

battle with more than thirty Germans. With no avenue of escape offered for the hemmed-in Americans, Maxwell sprawled over the missile, although knowing his action meant almost certain death for himself.

The corporal saved the lives of his companions engaged with him in the defense of a battalion observation post and providentially survived the ordeal, although permanently injured. It was the FIRST action in the Belfort campaign resulting in the award of a Medal of Honor. Maxwell was also the LAST serviceman to be cited for this highest of decorations by President Roosevelt before his death.

BELL'S BEER BARREL

A northward surge of less than thirty miles by Patch's army from Besançon brought one element of troops to Vesoul on the day the 3d and 7th Armies made their historic contact west of the city.

The FIRST tank destroyer to enter Vesoul, on September 12, was commanded by Lieutenant Charles R. (Bob) BELL, of St. Louis, Missouri. The aggressive and impetuous lieutenant was always so keyed up to every momentous situation that he repeatedly gained the admiration of his superiors as well as the French command, which awarded him the Croix de Guerre. And the accolades he won in his series of exploits even came from the citizenry of liberated areas, as attested by the kisses and cakes showered on him by grateful villagers when he rode triumphantly into Vesoul.

In Italy the U. S. Rangers found Bell a handy man to have around. Often when things got tough the St. Louisan showed up with his tank destroyers, "The Bum's Rush" and "The Beer Barrel," to help in the liquidation of the enemy.

In addition to this adroit campaigning on the beachhead south of Rome, Bell later won praise from the French for his contributions in the rugged Colmar Pocket Battle immediately west of the Rhine River.

The lieutenant, furthermore, was the FIRST soldier to land in an armored vehicle in the invasion on the Riviera

beachhead, getting there a matter of 120 minutes before H-hour.

Bell's disregard for danger brought him wounds in the Italian campaign; and, finally, he was wounded so severely in Germany that he was brought back to America.

Two captains shared in leading the FIRST American troops into Vesoul—James W. COLE, of Encinitas, California, and Warren M. STUART, of Chicago, Illinois.

The Chicago infantryman in General Devers' 6th Army Group also won acclaim when a force he commanded captured Cleurie Quarry, a granite fortress, in a nine-hour battle that brought about the death of the Nazi garrison commander and the capture of 52 prisoners. The FIRST group to contact the Germans in this encounter was a three-man patrol, one of whom was Lieutenant Victor L. KANDLE, of Puyallup, Washington, and a native of Roy in the same state, who shot the enemy commander of the fortress.

Kandle's greatest feat was recorded two months later near La Forge, France. He led a patrol into "No Man's Land," surprised a hostile force, killed four Germans, and gathered six prisoners. The "one-man-army" lieutenant then charged a Nazi outpost dugout, taking fifteen more prisoners. His total bag was fifty killed or captured.

For these thrilling exploits Kandle was awarded the Medal of Honor.

ARMIES AMALGAMATE

General Patch's 7th Army achieved its first main objective in the southern invasion when contact was made with General Patton's 3d Army, sweeping from the west, on September 12.

One account credited two U. S. signal-corps photographers from the 3d Army with being the FIRST Americans to accomplish the junction. They were Private Howard E. (Jesse) JAMES, of Niagara Falls, New York, and Sergeant William E. TEAS, of Pasadena, California. They swept down from Chatillon and encountered a French destroyer outfit

attached to the 7th, the meeting place being in the village of St. Seine L'Abbaye.

(A later narrative appearing in the *Stars and Stripes* said the meeting occurred in the central France town of Autun, and that the FIRST soldier in the 3d entitled to the honor was Corporal Carl NEWMAN, of Brooklyn, New York. He met a unit of 7th Army French troops while on patrol duty.)

The main forces of the two armies were joined on the Seine River at Chatillon. The Allies announced that the juncture closed "the last remaining avenue of the enemy's withdrawal from southern and western France," and that "substantial numbers of Germans were cut off."

SEPTEMBER SURRENDER

Almost 20,000 German troops moving out of southwest France were doomed by the sealing of the now continuous Allied front from the Brittany coast on the extreme west to the very borders of Germany on the Eastern Front.

Reich General Eisner had been given the assignment August 26 of regrouping all Nazi troops along the Spanish border and bringing them safely in retreat to their homeland. After nearly three weeks of uncontested progress involving 200 miles of marching, the enemy contingent got as far as the village of Decize, south of the Loire River and about sixty miles south of Paris, when American ingenuity rounded them up intact in a bloodless surrender.

Key man in the military drama was Lieutenant Samuel MAGILL, of Ashtabula, Ohio. One correspondent labeled him another "Lawrence of Arabia." His involvement followed the FIRST crossing of the bridgeless Loire River by his famous reconnaissance unit of nineteen men. Magill conducted negotiations with the hostile general, resulting in the formal surrender of the "lost" army of 19,312 soldiers, near Orleans, to General Macon of the Thunderbolt Division.

In Magill's patrol group were two privates who teamed up to become the FIRST Americans to cross the Loire in this

section of France. They were James E. TOWNSEND, of Petoskey, Michigan, and James REILLY, of Thomaston, Connecticut.

Magill's resourcefulness was again evident when he went into Belgium and led his group in the capture of fifty more Germans. In Germany, still later, the Ohioan was a leader of advance elements of a battalion task force which established a historic link-up with Russian troops while stationed on the bridgehead on the east bank of the Elbe River.

BREST BATTLE

In the meantime the great siege of Brest was continuing on the western tip of France.

Hitler had ordered this great seaport held at all costs. It was needed badly by the Allies for the opening of a new supply route to maintain the greatly increasing troops surging toward the German border. The port was also the most important of enemy U-boat bases.

Brest and several other Breton cities with vital harbors were selected by the enemy for last-ditch stands. The German command thus hoped to draw enough Allied troops away from the main body to weaken the forthcoming assault on the homeland.

In this respect Hitler was outguessed and outwitted. No reinforcements were called up to cope with the spots of fanatical enemy resistance. A comparatively small force from General Troy Middleton's 8th Corps, composed of three infantry divisions, took care of the seaport situation.

The drive to Brest was performed by the 6th Armored Division, commanded by Major General Robert W. GROW, of Iowa, known as "Blood and Guts, Jr." because he was looked upon as a second edition of General Patton. Landing in France July 17, this "amateur" outfit went into its FIRST combat the following day. Ten days later the 6th was on its way to Brest.

Save for sporadic opposition, the advance of 250 miles from Lessay—July 28 to August 7—to the outskirts of Brest,

was accomplished with a minimum of contest. However, General Grow, whose unit later became the FIRST division in the 7th Army to reach the Rhine River, had a rather hectic time dashing across the Brittany Peninsula, as attested by the fact his men killed many hundreds of the Nazis and captured 5,000, while losing only a few of the tank crewmen.

The American infantrymen at Brest encountered the best defenses ever seen in France. There were 46 days of intense street fighting, and almost always house-to-house engagements. The stubborn enemy battled all the way to the prized submarine pen field on the river until there was no place left for fighting. One description of the long battle was that it was the "dirtiest and most exasperating combat" of the war up to that time.

After spurning Allied surrender demands for weeks, in face of hopeless conflict, General Hans Remcke of the enemy finally gave up. Major General Walter M. ROBERTSON, of the 2nd Infantry Division, accepted the capitulation terms on September 20. This officer of southern birth later led the FIRST units of the 1st Army to break through the FIRST of the Siegfried Line's two main defense belts.

Two days before the fall of the Nazi fortress Lieutenant Joseph STEPHENSON, of Shreveport, Louisiana, raised the FIRST American flag to fly over Brest. The colors were hoisted over one of the leading hotels.

When Brest was liberated, it emerged as a city of ruins. For hours before truce negotiations began there was terrible artillery bombardment. Months of aerial pounding had also left their indelible mark.

The total bag of Nazi prisoners was 36,389.

The ports of Lorient and St. Nazaire fell later. Private Earl R. WILLIAMS, of Maryville, Missouri, was the FIRST enlisted man of the 128th Field Artillery Battalion to win the bronze star, as a result of superb repair of communication wires under a rain of bullets in a fierce engagement near Lorient. This city also harbored enemy submarine nests.

Lieutenant Colonel Richard E. TURNER, of Oklahoma City and Bartlesville, Oklahoma, pilot of a Mustang fighter,

an air ace and commander of a squadron of planes, became the FIRST flyer of the 9th Air Force to pile up 300 hours of combat, which was reached in a mission in dive-bombing Brest on September 8. Earlier he had delivered a one-man bombing and strafing attack on a Nazi airfield in northern France, killing or wounding forty to fifty German soldiers. His total of enemy planes destroyed was sixteen, including some ground kills.

LIBERTY LANE

General Patton's first month of campaigning on the Western Front took his 3d Army across most of France in a spectacular west-to-east plunge.

The steamroller offensive which started in Brittany August 1 saw the tank-infantry team rolling into Verdun and St. Mihiel on September 1, after occupying Argonne Forest. Only the day before, Americans had crossed the Meuse River into the old Maginot Line fortifications.

The first six days of September were a period of exasperation for Patton. His mighty force was stalled all that time because supplies could not keep up with the fast pace.

At Metz, the next great objective, today rests the FIRST place-marker set up after the conclusion of the war, on France's "Route of Liberty," tracing the course across the country taken by Patton's forces. The route is marked by beacons every kilometer and extends from Ste. Mère Eglise through Avranches, Rheims, Verdun, Metz and Thionville.

This long ride around the underside of the Nazi army carried the invaders into the outskirts of Metz on the 7th.

On the day before, the tanks had driven across the Moselle River. The FIRST Allied soldier to go over the stream was Lieutenant William J. MARSHALL, of Newark, New Jersey. A platoon leader, he opened the bridgehead when he forded the river with five tanks and held off the foe until a bridge was thrown across in this Lorraine basin area.

AUMETZ ACQUIRED

Patton's 3d Army front now extended for a distance of 300 miles. The surge in the drive toward Luxembourg carried the troops into the Maginot Line. The partial capture of this former stronghold involved the occupation of Aumetz.

One of the conquerors of the last-named town was Lieutenant Colonel J. (Foxhole) SMITH, of Houston, Texas, whose battalion was the FIRST unit to enter the bastion. Aumetz was the FIRST Alsatian community to be liberated by the Allies. The French Tricolor was hoisted above the town for the FIRST time since Hitler had incorporated Alsace and Lorraine into the Greater Reich in 1940. On the same day it was announced that Patton's forces had breached the outer defenses of the fortress of Nancy.

"Foxhole's" conquest was so inspiring that his commanding officer renamed Aumetz' "Hitler Street" as "Smith Street."

THIONVILLE TOTTERS

The slowing up of the American offensive in the Moselle Valley, because of low gasoline and other supplies, was particularly noticeable in the seesaw battle to conquer Thionville, center of the Lorraine iron and steel industry. The 3d Army captured the place on September 1, but the Germans came back two days later and regained possession.

Nine days passed before the doughboys could reverse the proceedings. The Americans now were fighting among a series of empty forts only eleven miles west of the frontier of Germany and ten miles from Luxembourg. The FIRST test round of artillery from this captured Maginot Line was fired by Sergeant Joseph E. PELLERIN, of Lawrence, Massachusetts. Fort Gingringen near Thionville was the scene of action.

On the day following the stormy entry into Thionville, hard-fighting tank forces took the old citadel, which was once held by Napoleon's army. The entire operation—cul-

minating on September 13—which had begun in August, was almost as difficult for the Americans as the struggle for Metz, now in progress eighteen miles south of Thionville. From the outset, Patton's forces held the portion of Thionville on the west bank of the Moselle River. The eastern part of the city on the other side of the stream had served as the big stumbling block in the prolonged assault.

INUNDATION—ISOLATION

More than twenty miles below Metz Patton began an attack toward the upper Saar Valley in the fourth week of October.

On orders from the 3d Army commander, warplanes smashed an old 800-foot earthen dam at Etang de Lindre. Waters flooded the Seille Valley for ten miles. The ruse caught the Nazis in the rear, isolating four towns where German resistance had been a big headache to the doughboys.

With enemy defenses inundated, the Americans charged into several towns, including Bezange la Petite and Moncourt.

At Bezange, captured October 23, Lieutenant James A. BAILEY, Jr., of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, led the FIRST force to penetrate the village, on the preceding day. Enemy tank opposition was more than the men had bargained for, and they withdrew after killing a number of the Jerries.

FIRST to reach the edge of the town was a unit led by Lieutenant George DISCUS, of Dallas, Texas. This group of engineers succeeded in clearing a path through minefields leading up to Bezange.

SQUEEZE STARTS

The lid was quietly pried open in the terrific 56-day campaign at Metz when the Americans sent patrols into the city, on September 6. Other scattered forces probed in the outskirts on the following day.

The reconnaissance revealed the enemy had few troops

to defend the great fortress. The time was opportune for attack and a relatively quick victory. But Patton was not in a position to begin an all-out assault. His supplies were still too meager.

The Nazis took advantage of the lull occasioned by the American fuel shortage. They rushed reinforcements to Metz and were prepared for strong resistance by the time the Americans were ready for sustained attack.

Not until the great Lorraine plain battle south of Metz was well under way did the Americans begin their squeeze on the fort-ringed city. There were 22 major forts in the area. The first to be assaulted was Fort Driant, west of Metz, on October 4. The bastion never yielded but was abandoned by the Nazis late in the campaign.

The FIRST of the chain of steel and concrete strongholds to fall was Fort Koenigsmacher, about fifteen miles north of Metz. Lieutenant Colonel Cleveland A. LYTLE, of Greensboro, North Carolina, led his battalion in inaugurating the attack. The operation, beginning November 8, required the crossing of the Moselle River to the east bank, where the fort was located. The Americans were forced to battle a raging flood in getting over the stream, in addition to braving enemy shellfire at the rate of three rounds a minute and the performance goes down in history as a saga of "hell and high water."

TANK TROUBLE TERMINATED

The great Allied winter offensive toward the Saar Basin began on November 8 in northwest France, and one of the main objectives along the way was the capture of Metz.

For weeks prior to the breakaway, Patton had been baffled, not because of inadequate supplies but because of the atrocious weather. Particularly discouraging was the deep mud which prevented tanks from leaving the roads to get around enemy roadblocks. Stalled in the mire, the "iron horses" were "sitting ducks" for Nazi fire.

Providentially, somebody eventually invented the so-

called "duck bills"—metal half-cups giving an additional ten-inch flotation for the tanks. This device broke the military log jam, and Patton resumed his breakneck drive eastward.

After five days of noteworthy progress the 5th Infantry Division hit the jackpot when Fort Verny was captured. Less than six miles outside Metz, this was the FIRST bastion in the chain south of that city to be yielded by the enemy. The seizure was made by a battalion led by Major Harris WALKER, of Bowling Green, Kentucky. No defense was offered.

The Kentuckian made it two days of victories in a row when he went on from the fort to the town of Pouilly, less than three miles south of Metz. He took more than 100 prisoners in a few hours during mopping-up operations.

METZ MASTERED

That Metz was a doomed citadel became increasingly apparent on November 16, when the city was surrounded on all sides, with the exception of a narrow escape corridor on the east. Along with the execution of a deep outflanking movement to the north on the following day, the advancing troops began trickling inside Metz at night.

With all hope of reinforcements shut off by Patton's circle of steel, the enemy began large-scale withdrawal.

The FIRST American jeep to reach the heart of the famed fortress city was driven by Private Eugene S. TYLER, of Alton, Illinois. The thrust was unintentional as well as premature, since the Jerries were still in solid control of that part of Metz. Fellow crewmen with Tyler—communications men—along with doughboys in another jeep, were trying to find the advance command post when the Illinoisan made the wrong turn, and before realizing the mistake found himself in the unwelcome company of the enemy.

Tyler's exit was a masterpiece of evasion. The Americans got out of the city unscathed before the Jerries could organize for pursuit.

While enemy retreat was at its height, the invaders,

fighting in the streets, gained a foothold on one-third of Metz on the 19th. The FIRST unit to drive in was the 5th Infantry Division's 10th Regiment, commanded by Colonel Robert P. BELL, of Montclair, New Jersey and Denver, Colorado. The colonel's men had previously captured Fort Aisne, a part of the Metz fortification network. The commander of the spearheading 5th Division was Major General Stafford L. IRWIN, of Fort Monroe, Virginia.

Doughboys overran Metz on the 20th, and the real battle was over by nightfall. Thus, General Patton became the FIRST commander to capture the fortress by storm since Attila the Hun accomplished the feat in the middle of the 5th Century.

Lieutenant General (then Major General) Walton H. WALKER, of Belton, Texas, commanded the 20th Corps which Patton employed in subduing Metz. His "Ghost Corps" had spearheaded the great race through France, crossing six rivers and liberating scores of towns. Walker's aggregation destroyed 200 Nazi tanks and killed or captured 20,000 enemy troops prior to Metz. He was later decorated for his unusual display of generalship in crossing the Seine River near Melun.

TORRID THRUST

In the southern sector of the Western Front General Patch's 7th Army struck into the Vosges Mountain passes on November 20. A rapid and torrid thrust was made into the great Saar Basin, steel and coal center upon which Hitler placed much dependence for carrying on the enemy war effort.

Lieutenant Lyle HOYT, of Rockville City, Iowa, led the FIRST U. S. patrol to the approaches of Sarrebourg, France, in the 7th's drive toward the Rhine. This town was in the corridor leading through the Vosges.

Selected as the Army's top-notch soldier in training, which resulted in his receiving the FIRST Expert Infantryman's badge to be awarded in the history of the armed

forces, Lieutenant (then Sergeant) Walter L. BULL, of Dundalk, Maryland, lived up to his reputation in the Vosges fighting. In this action he was the FIRST to win a battlefield commission in the 100th Division. The Marylander was promoted to lieutenant on the strength of his daring and resourcefulness in taking charge of a platoon when its leader was wounded.

Bull caused the withdrawal of a force of Nazis which assaulted his unit while on the flank of a battalion on the march. He bagged ten enemy prisoners.

RHINE RIVER REACHED

The plunge to the Rhine River in the southern fighting zone in France was accomplished by the 15th Corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Wade H. HAISLIP, of Reisterstown, Maryland, and a native of Woodstock, Virginia.

The drive reached its climax when his infantry and armored divisions tore into Strasbourg, on the west bank of the river and the border of Germany. This capital of Alsace, with a normal population of 180,000, was the FIRST large French city on the Rhine to be invested by the Americans.

General Haislip, who as assistant chief of staff early in the war drafted legislation tripling the size of the Army, prior to his Rhine campaign had directed his corps in the Battle of Northern France, spearheading Patton's army in bringing about the liberation of Paris. In September, before the drive on Strasbourg, Haislip's 3d Army unit made the FIRST contact with the 7th Army, which swept up France from Marseilles.

Two majors, John McCONNELL, of Fayetteville, Arkansas, and Merritt (Dutch) HURSH, of Paterson, New Jersey, teamed up in leading the FIRST American troops to enter Strasbourg, on November 24.

The rapid occupation of Strasbourg was led by Major General Ira T. WYCHE, of Ocracoke and Pinehurst, North Carolina, commander of the 79th Division, who had been

the FIRST American general to cross the Seine River in earlier fighting. This division, which held the record for mileage covered by troops in France, captured more than 10,000 prisoners at Strasbourg.

One pocket of Nazi defenders held out for eight days in the extreme east of Strasbourg. The last remnants of the enemy bridgehead were wiped out on December 2. The Jerries had been fleeing for a week across the flooded Rhine, and they blew up all three of the bridges in their final withdrawal.

FRENCH FINALE

From the standpoint of over-all conquest, the Battle of France was over in mid-December of 1944. Combat continued, however, in scattered sectors of the approaches to the Siegfried Line and the Rhine itself.

These hot spots were the "pockets" of last-ditch enemy resistance. One such was Colmar, the last large French city to be liberated by the Allies. This February 2-3 operation (in 1945) was followed more than a month later by the capture of Haguenau in Alsace.

In the 36th Infantry Division attack which rooted out the German garrison at the last-named town, the Americans had to cross the Moder River. The FIRST battalion to go over the stream was led by Lieutenant Colonel James H. CRITCHFIELD, of Fargo, North Dakota.

The solidification operations of the Alsace Front by the conquering troops occurred long after the 3d Army of the lower part of the French fighting front had engaged in a back-and-forth campaign carrying the doughboys into Germany, Luxembourg, and Belgium, and then back into Germany.

Among other individual accomplishments during the French campaign was that credited to Sergeant Edward V. HUCKABY, of Carlsbad, New Mexico. A tank commander, he knocked out the FIRST Nazi "Royal" Tiger tank to be destroyed by the 9th Army. Many regarded this revolution-

ary "iron horse" of the enemy as the best of all tanks in European fighting.

Other highlights: A Tennessean, Sergeant Walter LOW, of Smoky Junction, became the "Sergeant York" of the 95th Division. He charged two Nazi pillboxes singlehanded and captured 32 Jerries, enabling his company to advance after being held up. Low was the FIRST enlisted man in the 95th to be awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

While a postwar liaison officer in Baden Baden, Major Philip St. George COCKE, of Warrenton, Virginia, became the FIRST American directly commissioned a captain in the French Foreign Legion. Elsewhere he had been a soldier in the armies of three countries, being with a British regiment of Hussars before joining the U. S. Army in Ireland, and afterwards fighting in Tunis, Africa, alongside the French Foreign Legion.

Lieutenant Henry WILLIAMS, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was the FIRST soldier in Europe to be treated for rabies as a result of a dog bite during the 3d Army drive through France.

One of the French casualties was Private Howard KRIST, of Delevan, New York. A St. Louis Cardinal star, he was the FIRST veteran National League pitcher to be awarded the Purple Heart. He was wounded in the leg while on front-line duty.

The groom in the FIRST marriage of a Wac and a GI in France was Sergeant Gove SAULSBURY, of Baltimore, Maryland.

CHAPTER 9

FIRST PLUNGE OUT OF FRANCE

The Allies set the stage for a grueling and fast-moving autumn offensive with the arrival of September.

Advancing without pause in a breakneck drive out of northeast France, the American First Army under General Courtney H. HODGES, of Perry, Georgia, and armored elements of Patton's 3d Army swept into Belgium at three points on September 2 and 3, 1944.

The over-all strategy was to drive across that country, as well as Holland, lying to the north of Belgium, and attempt to pulverize the northern stretches of the Siegfried Line on the Rhine River.

With this accomplished, while the southern armies were pressing on the lower reaches of the great enemy Westwall defenses, the Allies figured on an early plunge into northwest Germany for a campaign on the Cologne Plains.

The British role in the master plan was to hold the northern flank extending into and through Holland.

An armored column captured Tournai, the first important Belgian city to fall on the first day of the invasion.

The FIRST armored outfit to break into Belgium was the 3d Division, commanded by Major General Maurice ROSE, of Denver, Colorado, and a native of Middletown, Connecticut, whose troops, incidentally, drove across that country in ten days.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles T. FORT, of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, led the FIRST column of the 1st Army penetration of Belgium in the border crossing from the direction of Hirson, France.

SPEARHEADING SNYDER

The race to pounce on the unsuspecting Nazis in their Belgian bulwarks had been a four-day affair involving an advance of almost 200 miles over France. In the final period of 72 hours, one spearheading unit led by Lieutenant Eugene K. SNYDER, of Detroit, Michigan, traveled 180 miles. His tank outfit, which had previously been the FIRST U. S. force to cross the Seine River below Paris, was the FIRST armored column to push into Belgium in a link-up with British troops bringing about the capture of Tournai, about 45 miles from Brussels.

Snyder's company had been on a reconnaissance mission. His travels in exploring roads, in support of infantry elements, had carried him into dangerous situations for 135 continuous days—a stretch all the way from the Normandy beachheads and across Belgium to the frontier of Germany.

The FIRST infantry division to reach Belgian soil was commanded by Major General Leland S. HOBBS, of Rutledge, Pennsylvania, and a native of Gloucester, Massachusetts. His 30th Division later drove German forces back in the American northern offensive against the Belgium Bulge, initiated during the enemy winter counteroffensive.

HARD-BOILED HARMON

The pell-mell drive thoroughly disorganized Hitler's forces, and within 24 hours after the invasion General Hodges captured Mons, seven miles inside Belgium, and the scene of a great battle in World War I.

Liège, the second largest city, fell to the 1st Army September 8. Not a shot was fired in the seizure of Eben Emael, the most famous fortress in Belgium, on the 11th. Vital Eupen was taken on the same day.

"Hard-boiled" Major General Ernest N. HARMON, of Vienna, Vermont, and a native of Lowell, Massachusetts, entered the Belgian fighting arena on September 12, taking

over the leadership of the 2nd Armored (Hell on Wheels) Division. He lost little time in bridging the Albert Canal while under enemy fire.

Harmon was one of the "founding fathers" of U. S. armored forces. He was in charge of all tanks in the Tunisian campaign in Africa and captured two Nazi generals and their staffs when they accepted surrender terms at Bizerte. The Vermonter later was in charge of the FIRST unit of the occupation forces to deal with Reich resistance after the fall of Germany.

COUNTRY CROSSINGS

General Hodge's plunge eastward was no less than sensational. Conquering everything in his path, the Georgian dashed out of Belgium, crossed Luxembourg, and entered Germany on the 11th. In the space of ten days he had engaged in combat in four countries.

In the meantime the British, meeting more resistance in the north of Belgium, captured Brussels on the 3d and seized Antwerp proper on the following day. Fierce enemy fighting along approaches to the city with many outer fortifications, and the frequent use of German V-weapons, prevented early seizure of the great port there. More than two months elapsed before the Allies gained control of the harbor. The long delay in receiving supplies by water at Antwerp slowed up the campaign to carry the fight into Germany on the scale originally scheduled.

The growing need for more fuel and other war necessities in the face of the greatly expanding front line was advantageous to the enemy in one other vital respect. It gave Von Runstedt the opportunity of reinforcing his garrisons all along the Rhine.

FIGHTING FIRSTS

MIDNIGHT MADNESS

The rapid attainment of major objectives in the American campaign in Belgium did not always entail easy progress. There were hardships and bloodshed, as in the case of any contested invasion.

An illustration of this is found in the unusual experience of Major William C. STONE, of Westminster, Maryland, who staged a thriller suggestive of Hollywood.

His "Railsplitter" Infantry Battalion was assigned the tough task of driving the Germans out of a village. Night attack was on the agenda, since 900 yards of open field lay between the unit's rallying point and the objective.

In this case the cover of darkness was of no particular advantage, because snow on the ground served to betray the doughboys' presence. Assaults on two occasions brought repulses.

After two days of frustration, the Railsplitter commander ordered his troops to don white underwear over their customary battle attire. Then, as unseen battlefield "ghosts," the men sallied out in what an uninformed onlooker would have regarded as an adventure of midnight madness.

The ruse worked, since the enemy did not observe the battalion's approach until the Americans were right upon them. The Jerry tanks made a hasty exit and their infantry was riddled with bullets. Others of the foe were dug out of their foxholes.

American casualties in the early Belgian campaign were not heavy, but one who paid the supreme penalty was a woman. Lieutenant Frances SLANGER, of Boston, Massachusetts, was the FIRST U. S. Army nurse killed in the European theater. She was struck by a Nazi shellburst on October 21.

HOLLAND HUBBUB

Hodges' 1st Army roared into Holland on September 14, five days after the capture of Liège, Belgium, about ten

miles south of the Netherlands border. Thus in two weeks the general had engaged in combat in five countries—the springboard, France, and the invaded lands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and Holland.

The FIRST Dutch city ever liberated by American troops was Maastricht, capital of Limburg Province, with 66,000 inhabitants. Although the main body of the left wing of the rampaging 1st Army swept through the town without pause, some had to tarry to contend with resisting Dutch Nazis. The die-or-escape struggle of these traitors resulted in the extinction of most of them. They preferred this fate rather than that of falling in the hands of enraged loyal citizens.

One reconnaissance expedition brought sudden death to 186 regular German troopers who had not been informed of the invasion. The raid constituted the FIRST armored-car attack by Americans on a big scale in the annals of Holland, and was conducted by Lieutenant Frank JORDAN, of Pulaski, Virginia.

MAASTRICHT MALICE

The fifteen-mile plunge across the southern tip of the Netherlands brought the Americans into German soil to the northern approaches of Aachen, a key point in the Siegfried Line. One of the objectives was to pinch off the German city of Cologne.

In the meantime, at Maastricht, a force of engineers and infantrymen frustrated an enemy attempt to flood the city and blow up a large part of the provincial capital. In this operation Lieutenant E. G. GRO, of Emmons, Iowa, led the FIRST group to be lowered to the surface of the Maas Canal.

A larger force following, and in charge of Lieutenant Colonel Paul McCOLLUM, of Highpoint, North Carolina, became the FIRST Americans to seize a lock. They captured almost 100 Nazis who crept up unsuspectingly on their mission to blow up the lock.

Captain Melvin C. HANDVILLE, of Syracuse, New

York, seized three functionaries at the Gestapo headquarters in Maastricht and forced them to point out every building in the city which had been mined. A big loss of life and wide destruction of property was thus prevented as a result of the ensuing FIRST large-scale demolition operation ever conducted in the Netherlands by a U. S. unit.

Colonel McCollum distinguished himself earlier when his battalion of infantry captured the great fort at Eben Emael, in Belgium, without firing a shot. This was less than a week before his exploit at Maastricht.

Captain Handville also gained wide notice in the Belgian campaign when, as an investigator in the Stavelot area, he probed German atrocities. The New Yorker substantiated a charge that fanatical Nazi SS (Elite Guard) troops had slaughtered without provocation at least 100 Belgian civilians. He also took charge of evacuees from the ruined city of Malmedy.

PARATROOP PARTICIPATION

The Netherlands invasion, involving separate incursions at the outset by American and British ground troops, was unfolded in three operations. It was record-breaking in the initial stages of the third and final phase.

The concluding penetration came out of the sky. The assault was waged by the greatest force of "umbrella troops" ever assembled for action. A three-pronged landing was made in a so-called "vertical" sequence.

Infiltration on the southern end was accomplished near Eindhoven by the 101st Airborne Division. A second earthward plunge was made 25 miles to the north, near Nijmegen, by the 82d Division. The third and northernmost operation was exclusively a British paratroop venture, occurring in the Arnhem area, ten miles north of Nijmegen.

The three forces composed the newly constituted 1st Allied Airborne Army, directed by Lieutenant General Lewis H. BRERETON, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It was the

FIRST instance in history of such a teaming up of British and American paratroop divisions.

SKY SERVICE

The troops came down astride the Waal, Meuse (Maas), and lower Rhine. The Americans seized crossings over the first two rivers.

In the opening two days, 2,800 planes and 1,600 gliders were employed. The great sky express of C-47s, carrying paratroopers, and gliders, transporting infantrymen, was under the direction of Major General Paul L. WILLIAMS, of Los Angeles, California, and a native of Detroit, Michigan. It was the FIRST time his 9th Troop Carrier Command had engaged in a combined British-American operation in such an undertaking.

The FIRST glider landed in Holland was piloted by Captain Henry HOBBS, of Greeley, Colorado. He was entrusted with the unusual role of directing a front-line defensive group.

Leader in the FIRST large-scale participation of Mustang planes against enemy air attackers over the fighting zone was Major Thomas L. GATES, of Archibald, Louisiana. His attacking force shot down 26 of 60 Nazi aircraft involved.

TAYLOR'S TRIUMPHS

The surprise sky assault in the southern phase of the invasion brought more drama to Major General Maxwell D. TAYLOR, of Keytesville, Missouri and Arlington, Virginia, commander of the 101st Airborne Division. It was thirty minutes after he landed before he contacted any of his troops.

The general was dropped by Colonel Frank J. McNEES, of St. Paul, Minnesota. The latter's 435th Troop Carrier group was the FIRST outfit to discharge paratroopers from a V-of-V formation. McNees' task of dropping division head-

quarters in Holland was the same he had performed earlier when landing General Taylor on the west side of the Cherbourg Peninsula in France.

Another troop-carrier commander, Colonel William B. WHITACRE, of Chicago and Western Springs, Illinois, of the 434th Group, conveyed the FIRST paratroops to land in the Netherlands.

Taylor's 101st, the FIRST division ever to receive the Presidential Unit Citation, occupied more than a dozen towns and villages on D-day. The FIRST to fall was Son. The liberation of Vechel was a major feat which saved a vital bridge and extended the clearance of a corridor for the transportation of Allied supplies to other battle fronts to the north, this town being an important road junction.

Eindhoven, with a population of 111,000, was the FIRST large city seized. Occupation by the 101st was on D-day plus two. British armor coming up from Belgium teamed up in the operation.

The Wilhelmina Canal area was the sore spot in Taylor's campaign. A mission to save three bridges over the waterway was unfulfilled. The Germans blew up the structures before the Americans could get there.

There was more frustration on the 23d when the enemy cut off the British column by severing an important road near the canal. The sector was recaptured after a 36-hour struggle.

One Wilhelmina Canal bridge captured intact by the paratroopers was the target of a Nazi counterattack entailing a battle which brought distinction to Captain David BRANT, of Hollywood, California. The action, which was suggestive of a movie thriller, was forced on a group of headquarters clerks in the absence of combat troops. Brant taught the battle rookies how to fire a bazooka. It was the FIRST operation of its kind in the Dutch campaign of paratroopers. The enemy fled after the clerks knocked out an attacking tank.

Taylor's fighters accounted for 2,300 prisoners during the first four days of the invasion while opening the corridor to

the north. They wiped out two battalions of Goering's parachute-training regiment.

NIJMEGEN NARRATIVE

The paratroop invasion was centered around Nijmegen, close to 25 miles above Eindhoven and less than fifteen miles below Arnhem where British sky troops landed. In this No. 2 American thrust the objective was the seizure of a pocket between Nijmegen and Arnhem.

This drive was under the general direction of Lieutenant General Matthew B. RIDGEWAY, of Fort Monroe, Virginia, commander of the 18th Airborne Corps. Six years later he was 8th Army chief in the Korean War.

The execution was in the hands of Major General James M. GAVIN, of Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania. The "most-jumped" general in the Army, his 82d Airborne Division was the FIRST to negotiate four airborne combat missions.

General Ridgeway, former commander of the 82d, conducted the FIRST airborne dash across the Mediterranean in the 1943 invasion of Sicily.

After two days British tanks merged with the 82d near Nijmegen and drove across the Waal Rhine River. They were soon making a race of it to reach the British paratroopers hemmed in by the Nazis in the Arnhem battle.

The American attempt to furnish relief for the trapped British in the northern invasion sector brought renown to Private John R. TOWLE, of Tyrone, Pennsylvania. A bazooka man, he singlehandedly broke up an enemy attack on his unit, near Woosterhout, on September 21. He drove German tank crews to flight, killing nine of the foe before he was himself fatally wounded. The Pennsylvanian was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously, the FIRST man in the 82d Division to be so honored.

Major William CHILDERS, of Memphis, Tennessee, led the FIRST element in the first landings by C-47 transport planes carrying supplies for the surrounded Britishers, landing near the town of Grave, along the Eindhoven-Arnhem

corridor. His squadron also deposited jeeps, men, and weapons on the forward airfield at Grave, on the 26th.

Going out on a personal reconnaissance mission because he had become bored by inactivity, Private Theodore BACHENHEIMER, of Los Angeles, California, stumbled into adventure more exciting than his wildest dreams. The paratrooper strolled into a Nazi-held town near the German border and soon made contact with 300 Dutch partisans. He became their leader, and on the following day they wrested the town from the enemy. He thus became the FIRST American to organize a Dutch army in a jump in rank overnight from a private to a "general." A native of Germany, Bachenheimer had previously found satisfaction in killing Nazis in Sicily and Italy.

CAMPAIGN CONCLUSION

The British withdrew from Arnhem on September 25, after a losing nine-day battle. Only 1,700 of an original force of about 8,000 paratroopers managed to get out. The debacle was blamed mostly on atrocious weather.

However, the British 2d Army, thwarted in an effort to join with the "lost" division of paratroopers, fought on to widen the wedge at the northern fringe of the Siegfried Line guarding Germany.

Coming into the fray late in October to bolster the Netherlands campaign was the American 104th "Timberwolves" Infantry Division, led by Major General (Terrible Terry) ALLEN, of El Paso, Texas, and a native of Ft. Douglas, Utah. His troops were the FIRST under the U. S. flag to move into the line on the Holland-Belgium front under Canadian Army command. The Americans replaced British units north of St. Leonard and Brecht.

This drive contributed to the eventual rout of the Nazis from the lower coastal corner of Holland and the opening of Antwerp as a supply route in the Battle of Germany.

Lieutenant Ivan OBERDAN, of St. Louis, Missouri, was commander of the FIRST tank in his battalion to knock out

a German Tiger tank during a fierce enemy counteroffensive on the Liesel-Meijel front early in November. The bow gunner who made the kill was Private George KIDWILER, of Brunswick, Maryland.

The FIRST glider to take off from a battlefield in the Netherlands for its home base after being salvaged was piloted by Flight Officer John D. HUGHES, of Los Angeles, California.

One of the crewmen of a bomber which frequently struck blows at Holland before the invasion was a navigator, Captain Sheldon J. PAST, of Brooklyn, New York. Before that he had led the FIRST raid ever made by Marauder planes in the European theater.

LUXEMBOURG LIBERATED

The breakthrough of the southern flank of Hodges' 1st Army into Luxembourg on September 10 was a curtain-raiser for the initial plunge into Germany.

In fact, the doughboys moved so fast they drove all the way across the European Grand Duchy in less than one day. The first artillery shots of the war were then fired upon German soil.

The FIRST force in Luxembourg to get a view of the Siegfried Line was a half-track crew led by Sergeant B. BROSNAN, of Worcester, Massachusetts.

The city of Luxembourg was captured in the sweep. The FIRST return of royalty to the capital of the little country was the concern of Lieutenant Ross GRIFFIN, of Enid, Oklahoma. He drove a jeep carrying the prince consort, Prince Felix, husband of Grand Duchess Charlotte, into the city the day after American tanks pushed through.

Lieutenant Colonel Edgar JETT, of Boston, Massachusetts, and a native of Richmond, Virginia, became the FIRST head of U. S. civil affairs in Luxembourg in the occupation of the city.

ARTILLERY ATTACK

American artillery stationed in Luxembourg fired the FIRST shells into Germany on the 10th at 5:22 P.M. The marksmen were twelve miles from their target—Bildchen, four miles from Aachen, Germany.

The regiment performing the feat was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Oscar A. AXELSON, of New York City. The order to fire was given by Lieutenant Edward J. AMAITIS, of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The lanyard was pulled by Private Joseph MUTNAN, of Carteret, New Jersey.

In another sector, Private Gordon OWEN, of Peever, South Dakota, pulled the lanyard on a 240-mm howitzer to send the FIRST shell to hit the Rhineland rail center of Duren, Germany.

Another sort of attack did explosive damage to a Reich target five days before the Bildchen operation. It was a noteworthy achievement because it marked the FIRST strike on German soil by 12th Air Force fighter planes. The flight of four Thunderbolts was led by Major Earl J. MAXWELL, of St. Charles, Missouri.

The raiders pounded enemy troops, destroyed a troop train and eighteen motor vehicles, and riddled some Nazi planes. This was Maxwell's 99th mission.

REICH REACHED

Reconnaissance units reached the border of Germany nine days before Hitler's own country was penetrated by American doughboys. The FIRST knot of soldiers to hit the German frontier was a patrol group led by Lieutenant Robert C. DOWNS, of Harrisburg and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The date was September 2, and the location was the Moselle Valley sector.

The FIRST American infantry officer to lead a patrol into the Reich was Lieutenant C. M. SHUGART, of Sioux City, Iowa. This was on September 11.

With the forward troop line lit up like a Christmas tree

to guard the men from Allied bombers pounding the area, the FIRST task force, an assault unit, plunged into Germany at 2:51 P.M., on September 12.

Led by Lieutenant Colonel William B. LOVELADY, of Soddy, Tennessee, the outfit, crossing the border from Belgium with tanks, infantry and engineers streaming behind it, lost no time knocking out two enemy mobile antitank guns. Six prisoners were also taken in the FIRST capture of Nazi soldiers on Rhineland soil.

Lovelady's pioneers then raced on as spearheaders in a drive toward Roetgen, ten miles southeast of Aachen.

In this same sector Sergeant Charles D. HILLER, of East Syracuse, New York, was driver of the FIRST American jeep to enter Germany.

Nearer Aachen, Captain Victor H. BRIGGS, of New York City, was in command of the FIRST infantrymen to cross the border in strength in the new fighting sector overlooking that city. The New Yorker, who led the FIRST unit of his division to come off the beach on D-day in Normandy, France, was killed in action 35 days after his Reich spearheading venture.

Accompanying Briggs in the Aachen area incursion was Lieutenant Stanley WINTERS, of Kansas. He led the FIRST company to make its bow on German soil in this penetration.

The division assigned to send the first complete tank outfit into Germany ran into trouble just as it was poised to cross the Our River from Luxembourg. Progress was stopped by a discouraging cement roadblock set up by the enemy. Lieutenant George REUTER, of Rahway, New Jersey, took ten volunteers with him. Carrying 500 pounds of TNT on their backs the little force plunged through heavy German fire and cleared away the block so that the armored troops could become the FIRST to reach Reich soil from Luxembourg.

Private Robert J. FUERST, of St. Louis, Missouri, was the FIRST St. Louisan to enter Germany. Captain Frank BOOL, of Waco, Texas, led the FIRST tank wave to attack the enemy on their own soil.

ROSE REDUCES ROTGEN

Combat was not as spectacular as expected as the real preliminary stage of the Battle of the Siegfried Line developed at the moment of the invasion of Germany.

Not a shot was fired as American tanks broke into the Reich and captured Rotgen, the FIRST German town to fall to the Allies. This occurred at 4:50 P.M., on the 12th.

The epochal seizure was conducted by the 3d Armored Division, commanded by Major General Maurice ROSE, of Denver, Colorado, and a native of Middletown, Connecticut. This hard-driving tank aggregation had raced across Belgium in ten days to make the FIRST penetration of Germany and occupy Rotgen on the same day.

A member of a reconnaissance squad who was wounded in "No Man's Land" in a battle rapidly developing north of Rotgen was the FIRST American soldier in that engagement to be returned to the United States. He was Private William STEEBER, of Whitelaw, Wisconsin.

Private Charles MYER, of Baltimore, Maryland, was the FIRST invading doughboy to have a tooth filled in Germany.

SIEGFRIED SPEARHEADERS

The assault on the Siegfried Line began on September 14.

A patrol party entered the defenses, however, on the previous day, being led by Sergeant Otis N. MADDOX, of Macon, Georgia, who thus became the FIRST American soldier to break into the heavily fortified area.

The FIRST breach in the line was accomplished by a company commanded by Captain Kimball R. RICHMOND, of Windsor, Vermont, near Aachen and between the towns of Stolberg and Eilendorf.

Generals Huebner and Barton, of the 1st and 4th Infantry Divisions, respectively, shared the honors in shattering the old belief the great network of steel and concrete could not be conquered. Surprisingly, the enemy failed to put forth

their best efforts on these westernmost reaches of the line. It soon became apparent the Nazis had elected to make their most determined stand further east on the banks of the Rhine, where another series of the Siegfried defenses stretched from Essen to the border of Switzerland.

Richmond's unit of the 1st Division dashed ahead for 6,000 yards, and then the spearheading was taken over by Lieutenant Frank B. KOLB, of Paducah, Kentucky, his company being the FIRST group to enter the second belt of the defenses.

The advance had the aspect of Indian warfare. Getting by stone underground blockades, the small force cleared the defense area by reducing eleven forts, all the time killing and capturing Jerries. There was only one American casualty.

Kolb, only 21 years old, was credited with being the FIRST American to make his way through the Siegfried Line.

WESTWALL WARFARE

The 4th Division attack upon the Westwall culminated in the subjugation of Schnee Eifel. These fortified heights were reached by the 22d Regiment commanded by Brigadier General (then Colonel) Charles T. LANHAM, of Washington, D. C. and Arlington, Virginia.

This unit's drive spearheaded the FIRST complete breaching of the Siegfried fortification network in a large-scale operation. The daring charge almost failed. Americans with rifles were caught on pillboxes housing Germans armed with machine guns.

Lanham rallied his men, and they all went ahead singing and shouting. Nothing could stop them once their confidence had been restored.

The FIRST battalions to accomplish complete breakthroughs in this operation were led by Lieutenant W. WITTKOPF, of East St. Louis, Illinois, and Captain Glenn W. THORNE, of Morgantown, West Virginia.

Lieutenant Paul BAER, of Reading, Pennsylvania, commanded the FIRST tank to pass all the way through the Siegfried Line. This was near Rotgen.

The FIRST Nazi jet-propelled ME-262 encountered over the Westwall was shot down by Lieutenant Valamore BEAUDARAULT, of White Plains, New York and Milford, New Hampshire, pilot of a Thunderbolt plane.

German resistance stiffened at other points along the Westwall. Weeks were to elapse before the Allies could conquer all of the Siegfried. The Rhine was still 25 to 50 miles to the east. The great river had to be crossed and another line of fortifications assaulted on the eastern banks of the stream.

AACHEN ATTACK

An enemy displaying the greatest desperation ever observed by American invaders in Europe endured terrific punishment in what turned out to be a hopeless defense of Aachen, medieval city of German kings and the burial site of Charlemagne.

The attack on this bastion of the Siegfried Line was initiated September 15. There was intermittent street fighting for more than a month.

The highest ground overlooking the city of 165,000 population today is known as Dawson Ridge, named after Captain Joseph T. DAWSON, of Waco, Texas, because of his heroic stand there. It was the FIRST instance of a geographical designation in honor of a fighting American in Germany.

"They shall not pass" was the Texan's byword during his domination of this gateway to besieged Aachen. Never in 39 days did the enemy succeed in getting by Dawson's company in their efforts to send reinforcements and supplies to the doomed community.

Stubborn Company G resisted all counterattacks on the 838-foot high ridge and stopped the three best divisions the

Nazis were able to muster in the operation. Three months earlier Dawson had led the FIRST unit reaching France in the invasion.

SQUEEZING STRATEGY

Although soon surrounded, Aachen could not be seized as long as the Americans were not well entrenched at strategic approaches to the city. This accounted for a series of battles in the area.

After more than two weeks of siege, the Americans broke through a deep belt of Siegfried Line fortifications north of Aachen in an outflanking operation. On the south the Hurtgen Forest battle resulted in a similar advantage to the invaders. The squeeze was completed in a drive east of the city, cutting off a road to Cologne.

The Germans, pledged to stand or die, defied a surrender ultimatum on October 11. Most of the city was in flames and other portions in ruins as a result of artillery and dive-bombing attacks when Americans unleashed a furious offensive on the streets.

Captain Ozell SMOOT, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, led the FIRST troops to cross the railroad tracks into Aachen, with the forces fighting from house to house. The doughboys surged into the city proper at 9:30 A.M. on the 13th, having entered from the south. Other columns were still east (11 miles) of the heavily fortified community.

SIGNIFICANT SURRENDER

Capture of Wufseln, by Major General Frank L. CULIN, Jr., of Tucson, Arizona, and a native of Seattle, Washington, sealed Aachen from the rest of Germany on the 16th. The operation had been the FIRST objective of the 87th Division in Germany. A day later two enemy divisions were decimated. Half of the Nazi citadel was under American control on the 19th.

After seven days of street fighting all organized resistance collapsed on the 20th. Aachen became the FIRST large German city to fall to the Americans. Credit for the victory went to Major General Clarence R. HUEBNER, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Bushton, Kansas.

Huebner's 1st Division also teamed up with the 4th Infantry in winning the Battle of Hurtgen Forest, and with the 30th Infantry in clamping the pincers on Aachen. The general had been a mess sergeant in World War I.

The FIRST formal surrender on German soil in American history was accepted the next day by Captain Seth BOTTS, of Kentucky. At the time the Nazis sent out a white flag this company commander was preparing to attack a bunker where the remnants of the garrison maintained a command post.

While Aachen was still in enemy hands, Lieutenant Reba Z. WHITTLE, of San Antonio and Rock Spring, Texas, became the FIRST American Army nurse to be captured in Europe. She was shot down near the Reich city while flying on a mission to pick up wounded doughboys.

Major Thomas F. LANCER, of Babylon, Long Island, established the military government in Aachen, the FIRST rule of its kind set up in a surrendered Reich community. However, only 100 inhabitants remained in the ruined city. Thousands of others were sheltered in refugee camps not far away.

The FIRST American Military Government officer to operate on German soil was Captain James H. DENISON, of Detroit, Michigan, detailed in the Aachen area.

ROER RUMBLINGS

The Battle of the Siegfried Line raged on for weeks after the capture of Aachen. It was during the great breakthrough of the defenses at Ubach that the 1st Army captured Alsdorf, while the squeeze was being put on Aachen.

Outstanding among the war's Army colonels was Colonel

Walter M. JOHNSON, of Missoula and Butte, Montana. One of his many exploits occurred at Alsdorf when he outwitted the Jerries' counterattack after the town had been captured. Enemy tanks invaded the streets, and Johnson's regiment of the 30th Infantry Division stalked the iron horses with bazookas in block-to-block pursuit while all the inhabitants hid in basements. The "battle of street corners" was won by the Americans.

Johnson later became the FIRST officer to storm into the heart of Hamelin, Germany, the community of "Pied Piper" fame.

Later Major John P. WEST, of Charleston, West Virginia, a military government official, reopened the FIRST coal mine in Germany at Alsdorf, and subsequently operated several other mines in the Rhine Valley.

The Roer Valley campaign developed into the most stubbornly contested affair, from the standpoint of enemy resistance, of any fighting in the Reich west of the Rhine. The Allies were checkmated for the most part until the following February by the difficult conditions imposed by Roer River dams and reservoirs, and as a result of sending reinforcements into the Battle of the Bulge.

Lieutenant General Raymond S. McLAIN, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and a native of Washington County, Kentucky, commander of the 19th Army Corps, whose troops were spearheaders in the drive into Germany, assumed command of his large unit in the Roer River Valley fighting on November 16.

The general was the FIRST National Guardsman to win command of an Army combat corps in the nation's military history.

The 9th Army charged ahead ten miles in ten days in opening the Roer offensive. Highlighting the drive on the southernmost flank were "Roosevelt's Shock Troops," commanded by Major General Leland S. HOBBS, of Rutledge, Pennsylvania, and a native of Gloucester, Massachusetts.

This force captured two towns in a matter of minutes as

a result of a ruse. The towns were Euchen and Mariadorf. The Americans omitted the usual artillery attack preceding all-out assault and caught the Germans napping.

Hobbs' 30th Division had previously been the FIRST to enter Belgium.

Colonel Johnson's regiment was the conqueror of Mariadorf. This unit also captured the key Mariadorf bridge, which had been mined by the enemy with 400 pounds of explosives.

HAMICH HEROISM

One of the most heroic exploits of the war took place near Hamich three days before that German town's capture on November 19.

The individual involved was a platoon leader, Sergeant Jake W. LINDSEY, of Lucedale, Mississippi. Wounded in the action, he refused to be evacuated. Fighting on, he repeatedly repulsed counterattacking Germans with accurate rifle fire.

Lindsey's ammunition gave out and he charged ahead with a bayonet. Exposing himself to enemy fire, he met his adversaries in open terrain, slashing and stabbing, killing three and capturing a like number.

In the entire action the aggressive Tennessean personally accounted for twenty enemy killed and an untold number wounded. He also knocked out two machine guns and seized two others.

In ceremonies six months later the sergeant became the FIRST serviceman ever presented the Medal of Honor by a President of the United States in the presence of a joint session of Congress. He was the 100th infantryman to be given the country's highest valor medal.

COLORFUL COLONEL

The FIRST village to fall in the 9th Army's Roer offensive was Gressenich, seven miles east of Aachen.

The troops conducting this drive were led by Major General Louis A. CRAIG, of West Point, New York and Raleigh, North Carolina, commander of the 9th Division.

It took two and a half hours to overcome enemy resistance and silence the last snipers on November 22. The overpowering of the Reich garrison was accomplished by regimental troops under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) James D. ALLGOOD, of Dallas, Oregon, one of the most colorful of American officers in European combat.

The capture of the enemy stronghold of Eschweiler, involving almost five days of conflict, was anything but an easy undertaking. The area was heavily fortified.

Many American lives were saved on the 18th through the action of a force led by Lieutenant Colonel Robert R. CLARK, Jr., of St. Joseph, Missouri and Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In the FIRST night attack ever made by U. S. troops in Germany, Clark's regimental unit crawled for 1,000 yards through forests to the last ridge short of Eschweiler. The Nazis were caught napping by the surprise move involving a creeping operation lasting for six hours in total darkness.

EUROPEAN EXTRAVAGANZA

The pulsating November advance toward the Roer River and the great Cologne Plain involved one of the fiercest European battles to occur in months, with the drive reaching its climax near Setterich.

The 9th Army, commanded by Lieutenant General William H. (Texas Bill) SIMPSON, of Weatherford, Texas, encountered fanatical German resistance while sweeping through one town after another east of Aachen. Brought to the front to bolster the combined effort to pierce the remaining Siegfried Line defenses, the 9th, which eventually became the FIRST army to reach the Rhine River, had captured Puffendorf, Mariadorf, and Wurselen just before seizing Setterich on the 19th.

On the same day Geilenkirchen, key bastion of the Siegfried Line, a few miles north of Setterich, as well as the

industrial Wurm Valley, both fell to other fighting units in simultaneous operations. The 80th (Railsplitters) Division under Major General Alexander R. BOLLING, Sr., of Washington, D. C., and a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, saw its FIRST combat action at Geilenkirchen and teamed up with the British in the capture of that city.

General Simpson's showdown battle with the Nazis in the coal-mining center of Germany brought about the decimation of 118 hostile tanks in seven days. Enemy casualties totaled 9,000. Other fighting resulted in the wiping out of two Panzer divisions and the mauling of several other enemy outfits.

Reaching Germany in time for the November extravaganza was the FIRST Negro unit of soldiers to engage in combat on Reich soil. It was the 707th Field Artillery Battalion, commanded by a white officer, Lieutenant Colonel L. G. WITMER, of Lake City, Iowa. These troops moved 600 miles from near Cherbourg, France, to Germany, in four days.

Lieutenant James H. ROBINSON, of Wilberforce, Ohio, became the FIRST Negro battalion officer to fight in the Reich.

SAAR STRUGGLE

The early December campaign in the extreme western belt of Germany featured at the outset the plunge of the southern division of Patton's 3d Army into the Saar Basin. These troops were among the conquerors of Metz.

General Irwin's Fifth Infantry Division spearheaded the drive eight miles south of Saarlautern. The FIRST regiment of this outfit to cross into Germany was commanded by Colonel Robert F. BELL, of Denver, Colorado and Montclair, New Jersey. The December 1 operation broadened the 3d Army's front in the Reich to a distance of almost thirty miles, with a total of 100 square miles seized.

The Saar Basin stronghold of Saarlautern was virtually "no man's city" for almost four months. The nip-and-tuck

affair around the Siegfried Line bastion had its beginning December 2 when the 95th Division smashed through most of the western part of the industrial center while the 5th Division crossed the Saar frontier eight miles to the south.

The main attack in the northern operation was directed by Major J. L. RICHMOND, of Kyle, Texas. It was the FIRST assault ever made by Americans on a Saar Basin city.

The FIRST troops to enter were commanded by Colonel Robert L. BACON, of Harlingen, Texas.

DECEMBER DRAMA

A drama was unfolded as the Americans started to cross the Saar River in assault boats at 5 A.M. on the 3d. The objective of the infantryman was to outflank the important bridge almost in the heart of Saarlautern. This move, directed by Lieutenant Colonel Tobias R. PHILBIN, of Clinton, Massachusetts, resulted in saving the span from destruction. The battalion commander's forces cut the wires connected with bombs at 7:21, nine minutes before the time scheduled by the Germans to blow up the bridge.

Philbin did a little shooting on his own account during the operation. While his men were stealing Indian-fashion across the river without the knowledge of the enemy, this officer used his machine pistol to kill several Nazis starting across the span to investigate the commotion. Philbin's success in this exploit of Colonel Bacon's regiment made possible the FIRST close-quarters challenge to the Siegfried Line by the 3d Army.

Captain J. R. MATTHEW, of Knox, Indiana, a medical-aid station commander, evacuated the FIRST wounded men across the Saar River. A former Indiana University football player, Matthew previously at St. Lo, France, had won the Silver Star for pulling two injured soldiers from a tank under fire.

Fighting in Saarlautern continued for days on the eastern side of the Saar. Resistance here was much greater than had been the case in the western half of the city split by the

river's course. Now the Germans were attacking the bridgehead from the West Wall.

Saarlautern was not cleared by the Americans until March 20, the long interval being the result of the great shift of troops many miles to the north to match the German counterattack creating the dangerous Belgian Bulge.

PUGNACIOUS POLICEMAN

A former policeman on a one-man-army operation was more than a match for a sizable column of Nazi infantry and tankmen when Americans clinched the occupation of Prummern in the Aachen area. He was Lieutenant Carl C. PALM, of Brooklyn, New York.

The 28-year-old Army officer took his platoon into the town under the impression the enemy had been driven out by an element of his battalion now fighting on the inside. Cornered when he encountered a hostile battalion already engaged in street fighting with a small group of Americans, Palm started throwing grenades at tanks and onrushing infantrymen, and fled into a house. Going to the roof, he started throwing explosives and soon killed all five commanders of the tanks in the street.

Then the lieutenant scurried to another nearby house and laid siege to a German command post across the way, killing three of the enemy officers. Following the all-night adventure, Palm left his post but returned to the town later in the day at the head of a force of doughboys who routed all remaining Jerries.

It was the FIRST time the policeman had ever been in action.

The battle beginning on the edge of the Cologne Plain brought additional attention to an outstanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Edward DRISCOLL, of Hempstead and Lynbrook, New York. His battalion captured the town of Luchem on the superhighway from Aachen to Cologne, December 3.

The hard-hitting leader had been a busy man in the sec-

tor since the September 12 plunge into Germany. He commanded the FIRST infantrymen to cross the border in strength in the Aachen sector. One of his lieutenants led the FIRST force to walk all the way through the Siegfried Line between Eilendorf and Stolberg.

HAFFNER'S H-HOUR

The southernmost penetration of Germany from France was accomplished by General Patch's 7th Army on December 15, one day before the beginning of Hitler's great counteroffensive which precipitated the Belgian Bulge Battle.

The FIRST of four crossings on this date by three divisions into the Bavarian Palatinate was made by the 103d Infantry Division of Major General Charles C. HAFFNER, Jr., of Chicago, north of Climbach and four miles west of Wissembourg. Other divisions going over at other points were the 45th and 79th.

Climbing around their own dead in the darkness, the 103d troops seized Le Diebhalt Hill, 1,350 feet high, the last barrier to German soil. They were led by Colonel Donovan YEWELL, of Connellsville, Pennsylvania, and his regiment gained the distinction of being the FIRST outfit of the 7th Army to enter the Reich.

Over other hills went the charging Americans, with the Siegfried guns roaring incessantly in desperate opposition. The FIRST battalion to go over the slopes into Germany was led by Lieutenant Colonel Waldmar MUELLER, of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Coming to Lauterbachel River, a group of doughboys in charge of Lieutenant William McCUTCHEON, of St. Joseph, Missouri, waded and staggered across the stream, some of them never making the distance in the face of heavy enemy firing. This outfit was the FIRST company of soldiers to reach Germany in the initial 7th Army operation.

Elmer WEBER, of Ft. Scott, Kansas, and Edward FARQUHAR, of Dallas, Texas, teamed up to become the FIRST sergeants to take tanks of the 7th across the border. Another

tanksman, Edward DOWD, of Red Bank, New Jersey, was the FIRST private to accomplish the feat.

The enemy attack in Belgium the next day caused a complete rearrangement of the Allies' Western Front setup. Troops all along the Siegfried Line were rerouted to the north to save the trapped friendly forces.

In a large measure, the 7th Army took over hard-won American positions where the campaign was brought to a standstill to release other armies for the difficult tasks facing the invaders in the Ardennes sector.

CHAPTER 10

FIRST GREAT AMERICAN SETBACK IN EUROPE

The costliest engagement in American history—Gettysburg notwithstanding—was the Battle of the Belgian Bulge.

During 26 days of the worst fighting the United States suffered casualties at the rate of more than 2,000 a day. The German losses were much higher.

The enemy struck on December 16, 1944, in one of the greatest counterblows in all warfare. Success meant certain rout of Americans and British armies, which had been taken unawares when poised for a victorious thrust into the heart of the Reich homeland.

Hitler ordered the surprise attack hoping for the recapture of Liège, the communications center and supply dump of the Allies, and counting heavily on regaining Antwerp, the vital port of entry essential to the maintenance of the invading forces.

Field Marshal Von Rundstedt, Germany's outstanding military strategist, picked the Allies' weakest front for the assault. Three American infantry divisions were thinly spread on a front of ninety miles in the Bastogne sector in Belgium and Luxembourg, and most of them were wearied as a result of hard campaigns including the bloody Hurtgen

Forest Battle. These were the troops chosen by the enemy for early slaughter.

The FIRST corps to encounter the foe was the 8th, commanded by Lieutenant General Troy H. MIDDLETON, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana and Hazelhurst, Mississippi.

Disaster became the lot of the 106th Infantry Division as the sun rose on the tragic 16th. The outfit was guarding a front of 27 miles, including the Siegfried Line ramparts of the Schnee Eifel ridge, two miles wide and ten miles long.

The 106th was a raw aggregation from the standpoint of battle knowledge. It had been activated at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, by Major General Alan W. JONES, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Goldendale, Washington. Known as the Lion Division, Jones' proteges had never performed any war chores aside from patrol duty during its abbreviated tenure in this Belgian area. Two regiments were swamped. Less than 300 of the thousands involved returned to the fighting arena. They joined a third regiment of the valiant 106th in effective delaying stands on both sides of St. Vith, one of the great battlegrounds of World War II in Europe. Their first combat experience became one of the epics of modern warfare.

Krinkel was one of the towns from which Americans were forced to flee because of the enemy steamroller. The LAST vehicle to get out of there intact before the onrush of the foe was a jeep driven by Private John S. PINNEY, of Toledo, Ohio. This soldier later became the FIRST doughboy to reach the 500,000-mark in the number of redeployed battle veterans to leave Europe after the end of the war against Hitler. Overseas 23 months, Pinney earned the Purple Heart as a result of wounds suffered when his jeep struck a mine during the crossing of the Rhine River.

SKYTROOPERS' STANDS

Skytroops are traditionally just what the name implies, but in the Ardennes battle the 82nd Airborne Division fought fiercely in a different category. Instead of jumping

from transports, they virtually drove to their objective afoot.

These troops, under the command of Major General James N. (Slim Jim) GAVIN, of Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania and New York City, went into the campaign for the FIRST time as "ground infantry" on a division basis. They entered the gory scene by motor convoy.

In its fifth campaign of the war, the 82d brought Hitler's three divisions of A-1 SS and Panzer units to a standstill between Bastogne and Liège. The Germans were eventually driven east of the Salm River.

Gavin's battlers contributed mightily in holding the vital road center of Bastogne. His position was on the northeast flank, east of the Stavelot area.

Equally effective was another band of paratroopers under Major General Anthony C. McAULIFFE, of Washington, D. C. His 101st Airborne Division gained immortal fame in the famous siege of Bastogne. The general's one-word defiance of the enemy's surrender demand was a classic of warfare. His answer was: "Nuts." He held off seven attacking divisions and destroyed 154 Nazi tanks. He was ready to take after the fleeing Germans until 3d Army units broke into the encircled town.

Later, General McAuliffe personally captured the FIRST Siegfried Line pillbox taken by his division, at the same time accepting the surrender of fourteen Germans.

FIGHTING FOOTBALLER

St. Vith finally fell to the enemy on December 21, but only after a heroic delaying stand engineered by a former football tackle and captain of the University of Illinois in 1940. The distinction of heading the FIRST engineering unit to halt a Nazi drive in the first two days of battle went to Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. RIGGS, Jr., of Huntington, West Virginia.

Fighting with only ten antitank guns and 300 men from two battalions, this colonel thwarted the German efforts to capture the vital road center for a week.

Generally speaking, the Americans were outnumbered almost 10 to 1 at the outset of the Ardennes Battle, and in the sector defended by Riggs and his valiant warriors the foe boasted of a full regiment of Volksgrenadiers with a company of tanks.

Reported missing in action on December 22, Riggs escaped from an enemy prison camp and fought with the Russians for ten days before rejoining his outfit in Germany.

COTA CONTENDERS

When an Army division wants a rest after battle fatigue, a quiet sector is usually indicated for a period of recuperation. The 28th (Keystone) Infantry Division won this sort of a concession when it went into the southern line of the 8th Corps in the mid-December lull in northern Luxembourg.

Out of a clear sky the clouds of a backfiring war all but blotted out this great 3d Army unit. Commanded by Major General Norman D. (Dutch) COTA, of Gainesville, Florida, and a native of Chelsea, Massachusetts, the 28th was selected as a scapegoat by the boastful Germans but proved its mettle by retarding the counteroffensive at Bastogne, being given equal credit with the 101st Airborne Division in stemming the tide of the Von Rundstedt drive.

Fighting tenaciously in the snow-covered terrain, in literally hundreds of engagements, the Cota contenders blocked a hostile thrust southward to the city of Luxembourg.

Cota's 109th Regiment set a great trap for the unsuspecting Germans near Diekirch on the 21st, which resulted in the slaying of 2,000 enemy troops.

The 28th was the FIRST infantry division to become heavily involved in the Belgian Bulge fighting.

MONSCHAU MASTERPIECE

Two of Hitler's crack divisions fought for days in a vain attempt to drive directly west to Liège from the Monschau

Forest in Germany. Further south the enemy had charged ahead for more than twenty miles. But near the town of Monschau American opposition could not be overcome.

Here on the so-called "shoulder" of the enemy offensive the famous 12th SS Panzer and the 1st Adolf Hitler Panzer could never make a dent in the line formed by the defending 1st Infantry Division commanded by Major General Clift ANDRUS, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Kansas.

The Germans finally withdrew from this "hot corner" of the Ardennes Battle. General Andrus, at Pearl Harbor when the Japs had attacked, had commanded the 1st Division's artillery until three days before the Germans started their December assault. Given full charge of the division, he celebrated his advancement by making an historic stand which resulted in the killing of more than 600 Nazis and the knocking out of nearly 50 of their tanks. The general's division had previously been the FIRST large unit to breach the Siegfried Line.

The enemy invested one-twelfth of his attacking strength at Monschau. Twenty-two other divisions were carving a bulge on other parts of the penetrated line stretching for about sixty miles as far south as Echternach, Luxembourg.

Sandwiched in between the 1st and 99th Divisions in the "shoulder" battle around Monschau was the immortal 2d Infantry Division, commanded by Major General Walter M. ROBERTSON, of Carmi, Illinois and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and a native of Nelson County, Virginia. The Germans never did get past him at the "hot corner," although his force was the target of one full enemy division and elements of five other divisions.

In holding a road network the foe desperately wanted, Robertson's men killed 1000 Panzer and SS fighters, wounded 1,030 others, knocked out 99 tanks, and destroyed uncounted other Nazi vehicles. The 1st Army commander sent a message to Robertson after he had stopped the enemy, saying, "What you have done will live forever in the pages of American history." In putting up a stone-wall defense, the

general more than once went out among his charging infantrymen and directed their fights.

Later Robertson led the FIRST units of the 1st Army to pierce the Siegfried Line in the first belt crossing in the opening of the February drive into Germany.

On the first day of the Monschau Forest operations, Major J. P. DUNN, of Chicago, Illinois, air-support officer, directed the FIRST American air attack against Germans massing against Robertson's troops.

PATTON'S PUSH

All records for a quick turnabout involving mass movement of a single army were shattered by the invincible 3d Army when called upon to attack the southern flank of the Belgian Bulge.

The forces of General Patton numbered 300,000, and the bulk of them were called into the hardest sectors of fighting, traveling on short notice through snow and ice for distances ranging from 50 to 150 miles.

A typical experience was that of the 5th Infantry Division commanded by Major General Stafford LeRoy (Red) IRWIN, of Ft. Monroe, Virginia and Washington, D. C. The "Red Diamond" outfit, the FIRST division to cross the Atlantic, had been fighting on the Saar bridgehead early on December 20. Reforming quickly after getting notice of the new assignment, the division sped northward for 69 miles and came to grips with the foe east of Bastogne and north of the Sauer River in northeast Luxembourg on the 22nd.

Meanwhile, more than twenty miles to the north of the 5th's stand, there was unfolding one of the most dramatic developments of the Bulge Battle. The 7th Armored Division had been defending St. Vith, vital road center. Although forced to yield the American salient there, the tank aggregation had imposed a delay fatal to the enemy's plans. Withdrawing to a point alongside the 82d Airborne Division, the 7th proved there are such things as blessings in disguise.

Although it had been at grips with six Nazi divisions for seven days, the American armored force wound up by splitting the German offensive in two by the 24th.

The crushing blow delivered under the leadership of Major General Robert W. HASBROUCK, of Kingston, New York and Washington, D. C., resulted in the killing of 2,500 Nazis and the destruction of more than 100 of their tanks while the 7th was losing less than 500 men in battlefield deaths. The division had been the FIRST to strike at Metz in the preceding September.

Major credit for driving a wedge into the enemy's front at St. Vith and forcing the previously cohesive troops of Hitler to battle on two fronts went to Brigadier General Bruce C. CLARK, of Syracuse, New York. He led the FIRST of General Hasbrouck's combat teams to crash into St. Vith.

The other half of Hasbrouck's spearheaders, led by Colonel Dwight A. ROSENBAUM, of St. Joseph, Missouri, established the FIRST new 7th Division front outside St. Vith as the battle began on the 17th.

The outstanding scouting platoon of the 7th was led by Lieutenant WILL ROGERS, Jr., son of the famed humorist. He was decorated for setting up a roadblock south of Stavelot in thwarting a force of the enemy threatening to cut off part of the Americans' forced withdrawal from the area. Rogers had resigned his seat in Congress to return to service and had been the FIRST member of the House to go to the Army.

RISKY RELIEF

Bastogne was surrounded by the enemy from the 19th to the 26th of December. During all of this time there was bitter American opposition which drove off every attempt to gain a foothold in this vital outpost, the hub of seven highways and one railway.

Sent in to help save the town and stave off the blazing Nazi offensive, elements of the 9th and 10th Armored Divi-

sions took part in the operations in collaboration with General McAuliffe's 101st Airborne Division.

The troops who joined the paratroopers in the week-long struggle were commanded by Major General John W. LEONARD, of San Antonio, Texas, and a native of Toledo, Ohio, and Major General William H. MORRIS, Jr., of Ocean Grove, New Jersey, and Washington, D. C.

Among these FIRST soldiers going to the relief of the beleaguered 101st was a radio operator, Sergeant James W. PIERCE, of Hyde Park, Massachusetts. He was the FIRST communications man of the 10th Armored to get a message out of Bastogne as the siege began. The sergeant was knocked down ten times by concussion and bombed out of basements on two occasions during the days of his fight for survival.

When drawn into the no-surrender battle, McAuliffe had been acting commander of the 101st in the absence of Major General Maxwell D. TAYLOR, of Keytesville, Missouri and Arlington, Virginia, normally in charge of the skytroop unit. Taylor had been recalled to Washington for military parleys and left the capital Christmas Eve, rejoining his command at Bastogne after traveling by plane and jeep. The general arrived a few hours before the end of the siege while the town was still under attack. The 101st was the FIRST airborne division ever to receive a Presidential unit citation.

BASTOGNE BOOMERANG

The encirclement of Bastogne by five enemy divisions was smashed on December 26, coming one day after other troops finally terminated the Germans' western advance less than three miles from the Meuse River and near Dinant.

One of the three divisions dispatched by General Patton to spell finis for the frustrated Jerries at Bastogne was the 26th (Yankee) commanded by Major General Willard S. PAUL, of Worcester and Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. A veteran of the Battle of Metz, this officer was the FIRST commander of the 75th Division when it was activated.

Two hundred Nazi tanks were destroyed up to the time Patton's forces swept in from the south. FIRST honors in this display of gunnery went to Sergeant Richard DEASTER, of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. He knocked out seven of 31 "iron horses" liquidated in a single battle.

The FIRST infantry division to blast through the German defense and link up with the American garrison of 10,000 men in Bastogne was the 80th "Blue Ridge" outfit commanded by Major General Horace L. McBRIDE, of Elgin, Nebraska. These were the same troops who, in the November campaign, nullified the Maginot defense line by capturing ten of its forts in a few hours and making major breaches in 85 minutes.

Lieutenant Walter P. CARR, of Hot Springs, Arkansas, led an infantry patrol in making the FIRST contact with the garrison.

The FIRST regiment to break through the Nazi encirclement was led by Colonel Lansing McVICKAR, of Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island. He was killed nineteen days later in Luxembourg.

Some drama was furnished by a medical corpsman in the closing hours of the struggle to hold Bastogne. Leader of a surgery company, Captain Jacob PEARL, of Brooklyn, New York, directed the FIRST ambulance into the city as the relief divisions went in. Attached to McAuliffe's garrison, this captain had been captured with his entire company by the enemy. With two others, he escaped and rejoined his division after hiding in the woods all night. He was commended for yeoman service among the wounded.

SILENT SPEARHEAD

A legendary figure in European fighting led the FIRST column of 4th Armored Division troops into Bastogne. He was Lieutenant Colonel Creighton W. (Abe) ABRAMS, of West Newton and Agawam, Massachusetts, a footballer at West Point before entering the regular service. He was known as the "silent man" because of his habit of failing to

report his exploits to his superiors until pressed for details. He commanded a tank battalion known as "Task Force Abrams." Later, in March, 1945, this colonel spearheaded the 4th's spectacular surge south of Cologne, plunging the enemy into disorganized retreat along a forty-mile front.

The 4th Armored, which previously had forced the enemy out of Nancy, France, was led by Major General John S. (Tiger Jack) WOOD, of Little Rock, Arkansas and Narberth, Pennsylvania. His outfit had been the FIRST armored division to cross the Moselle River. At Bastogne, the 4th teamed up with the 80th Infantry in relieving the pressure on the garrison.

Major General Hugh J. GAFFEY, of Hartford, Connecticut, and a native of Austin, Texas, became commander of the 4th Armored before the conclusion of the Bulge Battle. Made a corps commander in the following March, he was appointed military governor of the FIRST provincial government in Germany at the conclusion of the European war.

FOE'S FINAL FAILURE

The final frustrating blow which prevented the Teutonic forces from reaching the Meuse River in Belgium was delivered by the 2d Armored Division, known as "Roosevelt's Butchers" and "Hell on Wheels."

The perpetrator was Major General Ernest N. (Gravel Voice) HARMON, of Vienna, Vermont, and a native of Lowell, Massachusetts. Scene of battle was Celle, about 35 miles northwest of Bastogne.

Delayed at the latter point, the Germans had smashed through the American lines until, on the ninth day of their offensive, they were within four miles of the Meuse.

This was the day—the 24th—that Harmon barged in. He drove 100 miles from the Roer River front in one night, engaged a German Panzer division headed for Diant and Namur for four days, and drove the foe back for ten miles. The victory foiled Von Rundstedt's objective of cutting the American armies in half. The cost was four Sherman tanks

and light casualties for the 2d Armored, while the enemy had 2,000 killed and 1,050 taken prisoner.

At the end of the war Harmon was credited with being the Army's most experienced combat tank leader. He was the FIRST general called upon to deal with German resistance forces after the final capitulation of the Nazis.

Pacing Harmon's smash into the northwest flank of the breakthrough was one of his two combat commands led by Brigadier General John H. COLLIER, of Dallas, Texas. His was the FIRST force to go into major action at the start of the four-day battle around Celle. He destroyed all Nazi tanks found in the town of Ciney and, while racing toward Celle, his men knocked out an enemy column of 125 more vehicles.

The other half of Harmon's combat outfit raced to Celle under the leadership of Major General (then Brigadier General) Isaac D. WHITE, of Des Moines, Iowa, and a native of Petersboro, Vermont. His force decimated an enemy column outside the town.

Eight hundred enemy prisoners were soon gathered up in the woods surrounding Celle. Other hostile forces failed to rally when their armor was engulfed and almost entirely wiped out.

RAPID RAILSPLITTERS

The Allied "hatchet men" on the Western Front were given that name by their Nazi adversaries. They called themselves the "Railsplitters." Officially they were the 84th Infantry Division commanded by Major General (then Brigadier General) Alexander R. BOLLING, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Overnight this organization did an about-face that was unprecedented. This force left the 9th Army while fighting a hard battle on the Siegfried Line and transferred its allegiance to the 1st Army to plunge into the middle of seething warfare on another front in another country. This happened in the course of a single night.

Boiled down, the Railsplitters roared to the western tip of the Battle of the Bulge, and their drive was so rapid they once motored through a village not knowing it was in the hands of the enemy.

Bolling's doughboys had no support from other divisions. They were on their own, facing a desperate foe who had been driven back twelve miles from the deepest counter-offensive penetration.

Their chore was the defense of approaches to the towns of Rochefort and Marche. Through stubborn ground-holding, they frustrated Von Rundstedt's attempt to get through to road centers which would have given him a springboard for another westward sprint toward the Meuse.

The "hatchet men" were now more than seasoned veterans in less than six weeks after their FIRST combat action of the war at Geilenkirchen.

Decisive, too, were the victories of the 83d (Ohio) Infantry Division. This outfit drove along with the tankmen of General Rose's 3d Armored Division in reducing the tip of the enemy breakthrough about the same time the Railsplitters were staging the same sort of operation in conjunction with Harmon's armored troops in further hacking into the Bulge.

Also known as the Thunderbolt Division, the 83d, commanded by Major General Robert C. MACON, of Washington, D. C., booted the enemy out of Rochefort in December 28-30 action.

The FIRST company into Rochefort, normally a health resort, but not so healthy then, was led by Lieutenant Maurice L. HILL, of Booneville, Mississippi. This outfit remained inside the town, operating from cellars. They were still there, isolated from the division on the outside, when the Jerries decided to hustle out and abandon the place.

General Macon, who later established the FIRST bridgehead over the Elbe River, occupied Rochefort on the 30th.

TRIPLE TRIUMPH

Propelled into the fray early in the Bulge fighting, Patton's 3d Armored Division contributed to the ultimate downfall of Von Rundstedt somewhat in the manner of a triple play.

Commanded by Major General Maurice ROSE, of Denver, Colorado, and a native of Middletown, Connecticut, this outfit did notable work knocking out a force of Nazi paratroopers alighting south of Monschau. Another half of the 3d then joined up with General Hobbs' 30th Infantry Division during the northern resistance on the Bulge. In the deep snow in fierce fighting this combined force made shambles of a large contingent of enemy tanks in the Laggieze pocket west of Stavelot.

The triple play was completed when most of the division went into the area around Hotton. There task forces under Lieutenant Colonel Samuel M. (Task Force) HOGAN, of Pharr and Ft. Worth, Texas, did a superb job in that sector of stopping the German advance.

Daring Hogan and his 400 men had a flair for quick penetrations of the enemy lines. In one exploit he took sixty jeeps and tanks with him in a thirty-mile plunge eastward out of Marche. Entrapped by three Panzer divisions, the Texas bombshell fought for six days while outnumbered 100 to 1. The "lost" task force rejoined the main body of Americans, with all of its vehicles left behind, after the loss of only twenty men.

Hogan broke loose again ten days later when he providentially (for the Americans) cut the vital highway extending from Vielsalm to La Roche.

The Texan's hit-and-run outfit later established the FIRST bridgehead across the Erft River during the division's dash to Cologne, Germany.

The defense of Hotton was a classic of unorthodox warfare. On the records, it is shown that Major Jack W. FICKESSEN, of Waco, Texas, led the FIRST troops to resist an attack on the village. More striking is the fact the four-day

battle was fought by 300 Americans led by the Texan's engineers, supported only by a hastily formed task force of cooks, bakers, mechanics, signalmen, MPs and headquarters personnel.

The regular troops had pulled out when 1,000 Nazis attacked. Eventually relieved after their successful defense of the town, the hodgepodge task force had compiled a record of knocking out eight of the fifteen assaulting enemy tanks and killed or wounded ten Nazis to every casualty it had suffered.

LUXEMBOURG LUSTER

The heavy responsibility of checking the enemy in Luxembourg rested mainly on two American infantry divisions, the 4th and 5th.

The former, commanded by Major General Raymond O. (Tubby) BARTON, Sr., of Ada, Oklahoma, and Jacksonville, Florida, and a native of Grenada, Colorado, was another outfit which was suddenly switched from the 1st to the 3d Armies in the reshuffling occasioned by the German breakthrough on the 16th. This was one of the three divisions involved in the first stages of the Battle of the Bulge.

To the 4th fell the lot of foiling Von Rundstedt in the FIRST European attempt to recapture a liberated capital—the city of Luxembourg. Rushing westward from the Siegfried Line, the Germans crossed into Luxembourg to establish the southernmost fighting ground of the Bulge near Echternach. In a few hours the Nazis were within fifteen miles of the capital of the Duchy.

How well Barton succeeded in his assignment as a defender is indicated in General Patton's letter of congratulation to the 4th's commander:

"Your fight in Hurtgen Forest was an epic of stark infantry combat, but in my opinion your most recent fight—from December 16 to December 26—when with a tired division you halted the left shoulder of the German thrust into the American lines and saved the city of Luxembourg . . . is the

most outstanding accomplishment of yourself and your division."

On January 18 Barton's forces teamed up again with the 5th Division, led by General Irwin, in launching a surprise counteroffensive against the foe. The drive was opened by the crossing of the Sure River, with the leading doughboys dressed in white camouflage suits.

The 5th Division was the FIRST to go into action, and one of its main early objectives was the assault on Diekirch, seventeen miles northeast of Luxembourg city. This operation was performed by a battalion led by Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. CONNOR, of Cincinnati, Ohio and spelt doom for the German garrison of 300 men there.

Patton's Army now was on the way back to the Siegfried Line.

BUDS' BEAT-UPS

A third airborne division in the Ardennes Battle proved another thorn in the side of the faltering Germans.

The paratroopers, barging into the proceedings on January 1, 1945, were the FIRST parachute fighters to enter the European conflict after the enemy suffered reverses in their only big counteroffensive of the war against Americans.

They were commanded by Major General William M. (Uncle Bud) MILEY, of Starkville, Mississippi, and a native of Ft. Mason, California.

Unlike its predecessors in the Bulge Battle—the 101st and 82d—Miley's 17th Division had no part in breaking up an enemy siege but undertook an offensive role west of Bastogne at a time when Allied counterblows had recaptured nearly a third of the Bulge area overrun by the enemy.

These skytroops not only helped in the smashing of the German surge in the Flamierge area but foiled enemy hopes of a breakthrough to Neufchateau.

An Army athletic officer soon after World War I, Miley had been in charge of acrobatics at the FIRST military circus in 1919. He contended his athletic background had been

a factor in his appointment as a parachute commander. Two months before the Japs struck at Pearl Harbor the Mississippian bailed out with fifteen of his men in the FIRST semi-public demonstration of mass parachuting by the Army.

Known as the "Father of Skytroopers," Miley was proud of one of his outfits, called "Uncle Bud's Beat-ups." They played a sterling role in the capture of Essen, Germany, three months after their introduction into battle in Belgium.

Another parachute general dropped in on Western Front activities four days before "Uncle Bud's" appearance but did not participate in the offensive. He was Major General Leo DONOVAN, of Arlington, Virginia, and a native of Alabama. Previously he had organized the FIRST Negro skytroop unit to be activated in the American Army. Becoming assistant chief of Army ground force operations and training, his tour of battlefronts took him to Bastogne in the wake of the relieving divisions.

Still another January 1 occurrence given wide mention involved a rough-and-tumble air battle over Belgium. As a result, the 487th Mustang Squadron became the FIRST individual squadron in the 8th Air Force to be awarded a Presidential Citation. The outfit engaged 115 enemy divebombers, shooting down 23 of them without a single loss to the twelve U. S. planes. The squadron turned back the whole German force. The performance saved a forward airbase from threatened destruction. The leader of the wizard airmen was Lieutenant Colonel William T. HALTON, Jr., of Providence, Rhode Island. He first gained notice when he was flying a Thunderbolt plane and knocked out a Nazi flak tower during a raid on Muenster, Germany.

Again on the first day of the year there was a more tragic occurrence. Sergeant Henry (Hank) NOWAK, of Buffalo, New York, became the FIRST former National League player to make the supreme sacrifice in the entire war. An ex-St. Louis Cardinal pitcher, Nowak was killed in action while serving with an infantry division in the Ardennes Battle.

Another diamond star winning acclaim in the Bulge Bat-

tle was Lieutenant Jack H. KNOTT, of Brownwood, Texas. He was wounded in action on January 10. Ten days later he became the FIRST professional ball player to win a commission in combat, being promoted from a sergeancy. Knott had formerly been a pitcher for the Philadelphia Athletics and the St. Louis Browns.

Still another man wounded in the Ardennes had gained attention for his participation both against the Japs and Germans. He was Colonel Charles KEEGAN, of Yorkville, New York. This former Bronx alderman reputedly was the FIRST American to organize battalions and fight with them in both the Pacific and European campaigns.

After the war Keegan became military governor of the Munich area in Bavaria.

GROW'S GUARDIANS

Heralded as the main guardians of the corridor leading to Bastogne, the 6th Armored Division in Patton's 3d Army gave its greatest show of prowess during the first three weeks of January while the Bulge was being rapidly deflated. These troops, under Major General Robert W. GROW, of Iowa, passed the 200-mark in number of days of its fighting on the Western Front, during a nine-day battle immediately west of Bastogne.

This encounter was climaxed by the capture of Wardin on the 12th by a crack tank battalion led by Lieutenant Colonel Embry D. (Simon) LA GREW, of Lexington, Kentucky. Later his daring task force became the FIRST unit of the 3d Army to encamp on the Rhine inside Germany.

Attacks by artillery of the 6th Armored were perhaps the greatest single factor in the holding of the Bastogne corridor. The shelling of the enemy, starting in the first days of January, was terrific. The operation was in charge of Colonel Thomas R. BRUCE, Jr., of Mexico, Missouri. In one day his battalion fired 3,900 rounds.

The 97 tons of ammunition splattered by eighteen guns on the enemy destroyed many tanks and routed a regiment

of infantry. One month previously, Bruce's powerful force had fired the division's FIRST shells to alight in Germany in the pounding of the town of Auersmacher.

There was renewed activity in Luxembourg on the 21st when the 64th Armored came tearing out of Belgium through snow and icy roads and captured Troine. The spearheading was accomplished by La Grew's aggregation, and an advance of nine miles was made in one day from the starting point, Longvilly.

WINTER WIZARDRY

A January blizzard gripped Belgium during a killing drive made by Hodges' 1st Army in a smash through the center of the Nazi salient.

It was a "squeeze" operation to retard the escape of three crack Panzer Divisions in the tip of the Bulge.

Of six American divisions participating, the most damaging blows were dealt by the 82d Airborne Division commanded by Major General James N. (Slim Jim) GAVIN, of Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania and New York City. His northern flank outfit cut to pieces a German Volksgrenadier division. Seventeen hundred Nazi troops surrendered to the general.

Another 1,700 enemy soldiers were killed. A dozen villages were captured in a three-day drive to the Salm River, south of Stavelot. Gavin's division had been the FIRST airborne outfit to participate in four jumping operations—Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and Holland.

The 82d was noted for the exploits of its fighting lieutenants. One in particular in the January campaign was Lieutenant Joseph HALL, of Salem, New Jersey. He won the Silver Star for killing four of the enemy on the FIRST of his seven spectacular patrols in the Stavelot area.

On his third scouting expedition Hall and six men with him killed thirteen Germans near the village of Reharmont and put thirteen others to flight.

Gavin climaxed his drive by seizing a ridge northwest

of Salmchateau. This height commanded much of the St. Vith-La Roche highway, one of the two escape routes for three enemy divisions trying to get out of the Bulge.

The 2d "Hell on Wheels" Armored and the 84th Infantry Divisions teamed up to capture Samree. This operation gained complete control of the road as far east as Vielsalm, nine miles west of St. Vith.

The capture of Samree, described as the Nazi escape crossroads, entailed the biggest tank battle of the Ardennes Bulge campaign. The fighting occurred during a blinding blizzard. Brigadier General John H. COLLIER, of Dallas and San Antonio, Texas, led the FIRST troops to advance into the town. The FIRST regiment to go in was commanded by Colonel Sidney R. HINDS, of Lynchburg, Virginia and Nashville, Tennessee.

The last German escape highway, running from Houffalize to St. Vith, was cut in January 13 fighting. The FIRST troops across were led by Lieutenant Colonel Prentice (Iron Mike) YEOMANS, of Syracuse, New York. This spearhead-er's performance in all-day fighting was heralded as having contributed greatly to the near-collapse of enemy opposition in the mid-January campaign. Yeomans was killed in action April 18, 1945.

ARMIES' AMALGAMATION

The long-awaited junction of the American northern and southern flanks occurred on the night of the 15th.

The event was highly significant, because it meant there was no longer a gap between the upper and lower fronts of the Bulge. The FIRST contact between the 1st and 3d Armies took place southwest of Achouffe. A 2nd Armored division reconnaissance vehicle driven by Sergeant Charles C. DEAN, of Toccoa, Georgia, was encountered by three jeeps of a patrol in charge of Lieutenant Richard L. LUCAS, of Mt. Carmel, Illinois.

The prearranged, official link-up on this so-called "nose"

or "waist" of the Bulge was accomplished the next morning on the outskirts of Houffalize. Representing the 1st Army was an 84th Division patrol led by Lieutenant Byron BLANKENSHIP, of Texarkana, Arkansas. The reconnaissance participants called themselves the "snowboys," since they wore white capes and had negotiated a part of their trip through knee-deep snow. They had crossed the swollen ice-crustured Ourthe River in rubber boats.

While waiting for General Patton's patrol to show up, the Blankenship detachment strolled to the village of Engreux and captured it.

The ancient river town of Houffalize was taken the same day. The FIRST troops to enter were led by Lieutenant William B. SLOAN, of Leavenworth, Kansas. The Nazis had departed. The town was in ruins.

In the thirteen days following the opening of the Allied counteroffensive, the Bulge had been beaten down to what was called a "bump." The enemy had been forced back for a distance of forty miles of the sixty miles Von Rundstedt had originally gained.

Patton's 3d Army losses in the Ardennes Battle now totaled 4,796 killed, 22,100 wounded and 5,319 missing, an aggregate of more than 32,200 casualties, compared to the enemy's total of 143,800, including 32,000 killed.

ENEMY EXIT

The Ardennes Battle became an enemy rout on the 22d. St. Vith was entered and recaptured the following day by General Hasbrouck.

The town of Born, three miles east of St. Vith, fell after two days of fighting. The FIRST troops inside the village were led by a part Creek Indian, Captain Leo L. RODRIGUEZ, of Henryetta, Oklahoma.

The greatest enemy loss of the day was inflicted by U. S. fighter-bombers. A total of 4,190 pieces of heavy equipment was destroyed in a rain of destruction and death.

Two concentrations of vehicles of one entire German army were caught in hopeless traps ten miles southwest of Pruem and eight miles north of Diekirch.

The pilots of two Cub artillery planes were the FIRST to sight the hostile forces fleeing eastward from Luxembourg and Belgium. They were Lieutenant Bernard B. MACKALL, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Lieutenant Ellis E. THOMPSON, of Fairfield, North Dakota.

Also in Luxembourg, on the following day, an officer of the 26th (Yankee) Division became a legendary figure on the Western Front because he refused to take the credit for the capture of Eselborn. FIRST to enter the town, Major Charles LOCKHART, of Abilene, Texas, accomplished his mission with one snowplow and a mine-detecting detachment as his only instruments of combat.

Another hero was the leader of a 90th Division tank-destroyer battalion. During a fierce battle near Oberwampach, Belgium, this outfit, led by Lieutenant Colonel Frank C. SPIESS, of New Orleans, Louisiana, passed the 100-mark in the liquidation of Nazi "iron horses." His men knocked out eight tanks in the engagement, to run the score up to 102.

The Battle of the Bulge was declared officially terminated on the 25th.

Von Rundstedt reputedly sacrificed half of his divisions (about 220,000 casualties) in the 41 days of historic fighting. American losses totaled 77,000—8,000 killed, 48,000 wounded, and 21,000 captured or missing.

CHAPTER 11

FIRST WEEKS IN ENEMY HOMELAND

The Belgian Bulge fiasco forced the Hitler armies into a renewal of their desperate defensive stand in the seemingly forlorn hope of blocking a general Allied smash across the Rhine River on all fronts.

Out of this situation developed one of the greatest battles of all time—the Ruhr Basin engagement.

In the waning days of January and the first week of February, 1945, there was a lull in the over-all proceedings. A breathing spell was furnished a considerable portion of the then four American armies while the Allied forces regrouped for their coming campaign to strike the weakened enemy in the heart of Germany.

The reopening of the offensive on February 8 led to a series of dramatic episodes, including the reduction of the Saar Basin, the breakthrough of Siegfried Line defenses, establishment of the Remagen bridgehead, the series of Rhine River crossings, and the final drives to Berlin, Czechoslovakia, and Austria.

General Eisenhower gave the “go” sign to British Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery of the 21st Army Group to open the all-out February campaign on the northern flank. Next in action for a drive to the Rhine was the 12th Army Group commanded by General Omar N. BRADLEY, of Moberly, Missouri, and a native of Clark in the same state. He became the FIRST American general in history to command four field armies in a single group, involving jurisdiction over as many as a million soldiers.

The FIRST general attacks by American fighters were made by the 9th Army commanded by Lieutenant General

William H. (Texas Bill) SIMPSON, of Weatherford, Texas. He cracked down on the enemy in collaboration with the British and Canadians.

ARDENNES AFTERMATH

While the Germans were still withdrawing immediately after their Ardennes disaster, Simpson's army jumped back into action following six weeks of comparative inactivity while holding positions on the Roer River taken over from units which had switched to the Bulge.

When the enemy abandoned strong fortifications and raced to the Cologne Plain, the 102d Infantry Division, under Major General Frank A. KEATING, of Ridgewood, New Jersey, and a native of New York City, negotiated an easy capture of Brachelen, Germany, on January 26.

This inauguration of a series of encounters leading up to the main push almost a month later marked the FIRST time in the invasion of the Reich that the enemy had surrendered any sizeable sector of the Siegfried Line—a four-mile stretch of forts in this instance.

Keating's flamethrowers captured 97 pillboxes and overran six industrial towns in Rhenish Prussia. No artillery shells were fired, and the U. S. casualties were limited to nine.

The FIRST regiment to enter Brachelen was commanded by Colonel Bernard F. HURLESS, of Fairburg, Nebraska and Atlanta, Georgia. In a later thrust this unit took more than 2,000 prisoners in crossing the Roer. Hurless personally captured nineteen Germans.

Captain Paul ESTES, of East Orange, New Jersey, led the FIRST company to barge into Brachelen.

PATTON PRELUDE

Major segments of the 3d Army of sensational General Patton forded the Our River from Luxembourg into Germany on January 28-29.

Some historians will say this operation marked the be-

ginning of a 100-day battle inside Germany to conquer the Reich. Certain it is that this was the date span niched by Patton in fighting his way through Germany and then into Austria and Czechoslovakia, where the last shot of the war was fired.

Two days before the Our crossing one of the 3d's divisions, led by Major General Malony, fought its way five miles inside the Reich.

On the same day Patton's main forces, then still in Luxembourg, wiped out all that was left of the enemy bulge.

One of the 3d Army's outstanding spearheaders in later fighting in Germany drove through deep snow on the 28th to capture Berscheid, Belgium. The conquering battalion commander was Lieutenant Colonel Henry G. LEARNED, of Alexandria and Arlington, Virginia. On this occasion he was spearheading for the 1st Army.

One of Learned's characteristic raids was staged ten days earlier when he conducted a fifteen-mile march and captured or killed the entire group of Germans holed in atop a 5,000-foot ridge. The coup was engineered during a blinding snowstorm.

Rewarding the Virginian for his performance, the division commander named the treacherous terrain over which the battalion had trudged "Learned's Gulch." His capture of Berscheid on the 28th marked a turning point for the division under Major General Clift ANDRUS, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. It was a part of the outfit's FIRST major attack since the general had assumed command of the division three days before the beginning of the Bulge Battle. Except for "local assaults," Andrus had been on the defensive for six grueling weeks prior to the "on-to-Germany" campaign he launched in the ebbing days of January.

SNOWDRIFT SLUGGERS

As in the case of the 3d Army, General Hodges' 1st Army encountered atrocious winter conditions in emerging from

the Ardennes Bulge and creating a bulge of its own. Starting January 16, the outfit advanced eight miles during thirteen consecutive nights of fighting. More than 2,700 of the enemy were killed or captured.

Not a single American casualty was suffered in the capture of Herresbach on the night of the 28th, although the Nazis had 138 dead in the fighting, and 180 others were captured. There had been no orders to take the town. Decision to try it was a sudden inspiration of the two battalions, whose doughboys had trekked through the snow for twelve hours and wanted some buildings to sleep in.

The joint commanders of the victorious onslaught were Lieutenant Colonel Edward WELLEMS, of Miles City, Montana, and Lieutenant Colonel Julian COOK, of Montpelier, Vermont. They accomplished the FIRST big haul of German prisoners during the two-week-old offensive in any engagement in which no doughboys were killed or captured.

The 1st Army plunge into Germany was highlighted by advances of the 78th Infantry Division under Major General Edwin P. PARKER, Jr., a native of Wytheville, Virginia. His force went through waist-deep snowdrifts in the Monschau Forest and seized three miles of Siegfried Line forts on the 30th while three miles inside Germany. This outfit saw its FIRST action east of Rotgen late in 1944.

Encountering crumbling enemy units, Parker's sluggers raced on to Kesternich, which fell February 1. The division had been driven out of the same town three times in December fighting during the Bulge engagement, but went in for keeps on this occasion.

The FIRST troops to break into the center of Kesternich were led by Lieutenant Clyde TRIVETT, of Reading, Ohio. The Nazis, trying desperately to save the "tough" town, put up a stiff battle as the tommy-gunners advanced up the main street. Upon the successful conclusion of the surge, Trivett had only three men with him.

HOUSTON HERO

Now faced by a thaw which hampered its progress more than enemy resistance, the 1st Army was ten miles inside Germany on the 2d. Among the dents made in the defenses of the western Rhineland was the capture of Ramscheid. In this sector the Nazis began fighting from thick concrete pillboxes.

Discounting his misery, as a result of being shot in the foot by a hostile rifleman, Lieutenant Albert L. KOTZEBUE, of Houston, Texas, reorganized his company and seized a German position under intense fire, at Ramscheid. This officer became another sort of hero later in the war when he led a force making the FIRST contact with Russian Army patrols.

The 2d Infantry Division became the FIRST of General Hodges' aggregation to fight through the Siegfried Line's defense belts. This was on the same day that Ramscheid fell. The outfit was commanded by Major General Walter M. ROBERTSON, of Carmi, Illinois and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and a native of Nelson County, Virginia. He soon captured Schonesseffen and Bronsfeld, the latter affording the Americans control of the main highways leading into Schleiden, which was considerably east of the main belts of the Siegfried Line. Hitler had said this could not be broken apart.

COLMAR CONFLICT

A two-week general offensive by elements of the 7th Army, in conjunction with French First Army troops, was devoted to the clearing up of Alsace in France. The principal objective was the capture of Colmar, at the foot of the Vosges Mountains. The operation fitted in with Eisenhower's coming campaign to drive all Nazi troops into Germany. Colmar is ten miles west of the Rhine and the Reich border.

The jump-off occurred January 20, with American forces

fighting under the banner of the 21st Corps commanded by General Frank W. MILBURN, of Indianapolis, Indiana, and a native of Jasper in the same state. It was the FIRST of a series of operations in the clearance of the enemy from the west banks of the southern stretch of the Rhine.

Two of Milburn's key divisions in the campaign were the 3d Infantry, commanded by Major General John W. (Iron Mike) O'DANIEL, of Newark, Delaware and Atlanta, Georgia, and the 28th (Keystone) Infantry, led by Major General Norman D. (Dutch) COTA, of Gainesville, Florida, and a native of Chelsea, Massachusetts.

Cota's had been the FIRST infantry division heavily involved in the Bulge Battle.

A veteran of African, Italian, and southern France campaigns, O'Daniel's "Rock of the Marne" outfit became the FIRST infantry division to be awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

MIGHTY MURPHY

The most decorated combat soldier in the American Army won the Congressional Medal of Honor in heroic fighting in the Colmar pocket. He was Lieutenant Audie L. MURPHY, of Farmersville, Texas.

On his FIRST day as a company commander, this officer beat off 250 attacking German infantrymen and six tanks and personally killed or wounded 100 of his antagonists. The encounter occurred on January 26 after an unavailing siege of three days of the town of Holtzwihr. With a nucleus of only 32 enlisted men, he was called on to attack the town.

Mounting the turret of a burning tank destroyer, Murphy manned the guns and started shooting. Wounded in the upper left leg, he continued firing, having refused medical attention until the woods were cleared and the town captured.

Earlier in southern France, the Texan knocked out a hostile strongpoint including two machine guns. In Italy he was decorated for bravery on the Anzio beachhead. He

won his battlefield commission as a second lieutenant in the Vosges campaign, having been promoted in thirty months from buck private to a company commander.

Staging all of his daring exploits while attached to General O'Daniel's division, also known as the "Gypsy Troops of the Mediterranean," Murphy gave an inkling of his eager-beaver complex as early as July, 1943, when he landed with the FIRST wave of troops reaching Sicily on D-day.

VOSGES VICTORY

The capture on February 7 of the old Rhine River fortress of the town of Neuf-Brisach by O'Daniel's division was a crushing blow to the enemy. The addition of this venture to the February 2 seizure of the Alsatian city of Colmar spelled entrapment for a large contingent of the defenders.

Major James H. McCOY, of Mart, Texas, led the FIRST force of Americans to smash into Colmar. It was the last important French municipality to be liberated by the Allies.

Overrunning more than 25 towns after this, the invaders cleared the west bank of the Rhine for a distance of thirty miles south of Strasbourg.

The FIRST combat action of the newly formed 12th Armored (Hellcat) Division occurred in this Alsace campaign. Bitter fighting was experienced as the outfit entered the conflict before Gamsheim, under the command of Major General Roderick ALLEN, of Marshall, Texas.

The 12th co-ordinated with the French Fourth Corps at Rouffach in the encirclement of 10,000 Germans caught in the Colmar-Vosges pocket.

The Alsace campaign resulted in 25,000 casualties for the enemy.

ROER RESERVOIR ROUNDUP

Undoubtedly the greatest contribution to the smashing of enemy resistance to a thrust into the great industrial Ruhr

district was supplied by the magnificent campaigning of the 78th Infantry Division of General Parker. His doughboys dominated the Roer Valley proceedings of the 1st Army leading up to the capitulation of the heart of Germany.

Also outstanding in the Roer campaign was the seizure of the Urfttalsperre Dam by the 9th Infantry, commanded by Major General Louis CRAIG, of West Point, New York and Raleigh, North Carolina. His February 4 operation forestalled demolitions planned by the enemy to loose flood waters in front of the invading troops.

In the same area (on the Urft Lake) Craig's doughboys captured Odensburg Vogelsang, where the Germans had operated the FIRST of their elaborate leader-training schools.

The FIRST of the general's troops to reach the Urft—the oldest reservoir along the Roer—were commanded by Lieutenant Colonel James D. ALLGOOD, of Dallas, Oregon. To storm into the dam, his 47th Regiment had to pierce the second bastion of the West Wall at Wollseifen, which town this regimental force also captured.

General Parker's conquest of Schmidt, a ruined town overlooking the Cologne Plain, highlighted a six-day battle waged by the 1st Army. The immediate result was elimination of the last Nazis from the west banks of the Roer.

Schmidt had been captured and then lost during the November campaign involving the bloody struggle in the Hurtgen Forest. Three months later, on February 8, a weakened enemy did put up a fight, but it was not good enough this time. Here the Siegfried Line was completely invested. At the same time the Americans formed a crescent of steel around the Roer dams.

The FIRST U. S. infantryman to enter Schmidt was Lieutenant John LASKY, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a company chieftain. He was wounded later in the Cologne battle.

With the most-vital-of-all, Schwammenaul Dam, controlling flood waters in the valley, in possession of Hodges' 1st Army, some elements were able to cross the Roer River on February 11.

The new bridgehead furnished a funnel for the outpouring of doughboys leading toward eventual envelopment of the rich Ruhr Basin.

PATTON PRELIMINARIES

Patton's 3d Army won strategic positions in the first half of February, which gave the general convenient springboards for the launching of the Allies' major offensive in the fourth week of the month.

Main objectives in the preliminaries were the smashing of a sizable sector of the West Wall and the capture of Prum, Eifel Mountain citadel and important highway center.

The FIRST Patton breakthrough of the main belt of the Siegfried Line in the current campaign was performed by the 4th Infantry Division, commanded by Major General Harold W. BLAKELEY of Washington, D.C. and Malden, Massachusetts.

Nearby Branscheid, a heavily fortified town and communications center, was seized by a regiment led by Brigadier General (then Colonel) Charles T. LANHAM, of Washington, D.C. and Arlington, Virginia. More than forty pillboxes were cleared during the two hours of combat.

The same forces had been compelled to withdraw from this sector in the fighting in the previous fall after penetrating the fortifications.

WEST WALL WEDGING

Leading a battalion with many inexperienced replacements, Lieutenant Colonel Charles B. BRYAN, of Johns Island, South Carolina, captured ten villages in 54 hours on the west bank of the Prum River in the Brandscheid-Prum operations. In a spectacular dash of ten miles, this force under the over-all command of Major General Herbert L. EARNEST, of White Stone, Virginia, and a native of Richmond in the same state, knocked out eight pillboxes and captured 450 of the enemy.

Earnest's 90th Infantry was the FIRST division to enter Czechoslovakia more than two months afterwards. Bryan led the FIRST troops to cross the German border into that country.

In the meantime, General Irwin's 5th Division was penetrating the West Wall in another sector northwest of Echternach. The FIRST company to cross the Sure River in these operations was led by Captain Robert H. BERTACH, of Akron, Ohio. Many of the doughboys swam over the stream. Three enemy counterattacks were repulsed during the proceedings.

On the same day General McBride's 80th Division barged into Germany opposite Luxembourg and joined bridgeheads with the 5th, forming a salient ten miles wide and two miles deep.

Capture of the citadel of Prum, one more key to the network of defenses of the Rhineland, was accomplished on February 12 by General Blakeley's division.

One week later, the 94th Division of Major General Harry J. MALONY, of Lakemont and Dundee, New York, entered Germany opposite Remich, Luxembourg, and three days afterwards became the FIRST of Patton's divisions to cross the Saar River into a region destined to become one of the toughest battlegrounds of the coming spring drive.

D-DAY DRIVE

Eisenhower's long expected, roaring, two-army American offensive got under way at 3:30 o'clock on the morning of February 23.

This was the beginning of the United States phase of the battle to put a pincers on the great industrial Ruhr Basin; the start of a dash to vital Cologne; and D-day in the final drive within Germany to crush Hitler and Nazism irrevocably.

The FIRST Army to go into action was the 9th, commanded by Lieutenant General William H. (Texas Bill) SIMPSON, of Weatherford, Texas.

Crossing of the Roer River was the first objective. The FIRST division to get all of its units over the stream was the 9th Infantry, led by Major General Frank A. KEATING, of Ridgewood, New Jersey, and a native of New York City.

Heavy enemy fire was encountered when the FIRST company, numbering 200, went across in assault boats. The FIRST town seized on the east bank of the Roer was Roerdorf. In charge of this two-pronged spearheading was Captain Harold (Pancho) LOZANO, of San Antonio, Texas.

The FIRST use of smoke in concealment of doughboys crossing a river in the campaign was under the direction of Negro Captain Augustus SHAW, of Pasadena, California. His generating outfit was credited with being largely responsible for making it possible for the engineers to build vital bridges under terrific fire.

The efficient getaway of Simpson's Army was considerably expedited by a daring spearhead venture a half-hour before H-hour by a small task force led by Lieutenant Roy L. (Buck) ROGERS, of Allentown, Pennsylvania. Using two wooden boats, the doughboys crossed the Roer and cleared 500 yards of the east bank of the stream.

All returned from their expedition alive after knocking out five Nazi machine-gun nests and killing fifteen of the enemy and taking eight others prisoners. It was the FIRST D-day raid by Americans on the 9th Army front.

The swift current of the river and the deadly fire of the strongly resisting Germans rendered bridgehead operations the most difficult and costly from the standpoint of casualties of the entire Western Front campaign. Twenty-four hours passed before it became certain there would be no major slip-up.

The FIRST bridge-building engineers of the 8th Division across were commanded by Lieutenant Colonel E. M. FRY, Jr., of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. FIRST doughboy to cross the flooded Roer for this outfit and report his experience to headquarters was Sergeant Michael A. CAMILLO, of Linwood, Pennsylvania. The boat carrying his

"snooping" patrol was shot up, and the sergeant and his companions spent several days in hiding before returning to American lines for the D-day smash.

ARTILLERY ASCENDANCY

A mighty barrage of artillery spilled widespread death for the enemy not many hours following the initial crossings. More than 3000 guns roared simultaneously when set up—one hundred of them along every mile of the budding front.

All American 9th Army fighting at this time was under the over-all direction of British General Montgomery. The latter's Canadian forces had launched the general offensive fifteen days before the United States armies started their knockout drive. The Canadians had smashed past Kiel on the extreme north flank when Simpson's army began the Roer crossing on the 23rd.

Eight-hundred-year-old Julich was the FIRST important town to be swept out of German hands. This prize capture at the beginning of the American phase of the Battle of the Cologne Plain was negotiated by the 29th (Blue and Gray) Division of General Gerhardt. Cologne was twenty miles to the east.

Sergeant Leo BAUMHARDT, of St. Louis, Missouri, led a squad which seized the FIRST house captured in Julich in spirited combat, resulting in the killing of 25 of the enemy. The ruined town was the principal road center on the east-west highway between Aachen and Cologne.

Rurich, six miles north of Julich, became the FIRST town to be captured without waiting for a scheduled artillery attack. Captain Al C. PETERSON, of Monroe, Louisiana, led a company which waded out of the Roer waters into the settlement in a decision of his own which was contrary to the usual practice of a collaborating shelling operation.

Sergeant Harry FOX, of Terre Haute, Indiana, highlighted the seizure of another of the towns to fall on D-day.

He captured the FIRST two Jerries to surrender when Glimbach was taken.

With the armies rolling ahead successfully, it was now only a question of keeping them supplied. One of the key men in this phase of the warfare was Colonel Daniel H. HUNDLEY, of St. Louis, Missouri. He was decorated nineteen times for his efficiency and courage. Before joining General Simpson in fighting which carried him through Belgium, Holland, and Germany, the Missourian gained prominence in combat with the Japs.

As chief of staff of an infantry division, Hundley won a medal for his role in the capture of the Munda airbase, being also at that time commander of the Eastern Landing Force. He soon established the FIRST United States airfield on New Georgia Island.

HODGES' H-HOUR

Bradley's central front forces employed the 1st Army of General Hodges in the northern-flank fighting. Striking out on D-day east of Aachen, this powerful fighting outfit took a position immediately south of Simpson's 9th, the latter being placed near the southwest corner of the great Ruhr Basin.

In the first 36 hours of combat Hodges gained terrain dominating the Cologne Plain and captured thirty towns.

The 1st's infantry outfits met fierce resistance in capturing Dueren (population 40,000) on the third day of the advance. Largest and most ruined city yet taken over in the new campaign, this Rhenish bastion of the enemy, located on the east bank of the Roer, had been the bulwark of the Nazis' outer defenses. Its fall gave the Allies control of railroad and highway networks across the Cologne Plain.

The FIRST extensive American Military Government setup in the young campaign was established following the conquest of Dueren. Captain Arthur H. LARKINS, of San Francisco, California, became governor of that city and of 82 villages.

A ten-mile dash from Dueren requiring two days put the Americans in a position to cross the Erft, the last water barrier before Cologne. Crossings resulted from teamwork between General Rose's 3d Armored Division and the 8th Infantry commanded by Major General Bryant E. MOORE, of Ellsworth, Maine. The latter also fought the Japanese, having been the hero of an infantry engagement on Guadalcanal, leading the FIRST American army troops to go into action there. Moore was an early spearheader in the drive from the Erft to Cologne.

Wading and swimming, an 8th Division battalion led by Major Francis L. JENKINS, of Charleston, South Carolina, was the FIRST to cross the stream.

The toughest assignment in this operation fell to combat engineers. A force in charge of Lieutenant Lloyd N. SMITH, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, built the FIRST bridge over the Erft Canal. They worked amazingly fast while under a hail of mortar and machine-gun fire, and also set up a span across the nearby Erft River.

Another battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Samuel M. (Task Force) HOGAN, of Pharr and Ft. Worth, Texas, established the FIRST bridgehead over the river.

When the three bridgeheads had been won on February 28, the troops were less than seven miles from Cologne.

PATTON'S PARTICIPATION

Crossing the Saar River the day before the signal for the start of the general offensive, General Patton's 3d Army completed its scheduled assignment on D-day by seizing 33 towns on the northern fringe of the Saar Basin.

Spectacular as usual, the tank commander lost little time in knocking out the last enemy resistance for a distance of 32 miles in the West Wall east of Luxembourg.

For the FIRST time Hitler found himself without a town in the long string of outer fortifications. The last place captured was Hilfarth. It was a twelve-hour job and a strenu-

ous one, being accomplished by a force commanded by Colonel Dan E. CRAIG, of North Platte, Nebraska.

The 3d's breakthrough on the 26th was followed by a two-day fight to subjugate the road-junction of Bitburg. This operation was No. 1 on Patton's list. Without it, he would have had no logical gateway for a dash to the Rhine. For this reason Bitburg, a town of 6,000, was tagged with the label "Bastogne of Germany."

The enemy resistance was not staggering, however, in connection with the town's seizure by the 5th (Red Diamond) Division of Major General Stafford L. (Red) IRWIN, of Ft. Monroe, Virginia and Washington, D. C. His outfit had been the FIRST division to go overseas in World War II. Another phase of Patton's spectacular penetration of the Bitburg sector was a great drive by his 4th Armored and 80th Infantry Divisions in pursuit of demoralized enemy troopers toward the Rhineland hills.

TRIER TRIUMPH

Trier, the oldest city in Germany, fell to the 3d Army, including elements of the 8th Corps of General Middleton, on March 1-2. Heavily fortified, this manufacturing center of 88,000 population had once been used as a base of operations by Caesar.

Three thousand prisoners were taken, mostly by the 10th Armored Division, in a ten-mile dash from Saarburg to Trier while teamed up with the 94th Infantry Division of General Malony. Fourteen towns were captured. The enemy made a strong show of strength as the troops hit the outskirts of the city guarding the Moselle Valley and leading to the middle Rhine strongholds of Coblenz, Mainz, and Frankfort. The 10th Armored, led by Major General William H. MORRIS, Jr., of Ocean Grove, New Jersey and Washington, D. C., was the FIRST division to assault Trier. Once inside, the Nazi resistance was much less potent.

HISTORIC HORSESHOES

Envelopment of Trier involved two "horseshoe turns"—one by Morris and the other by Major General William R. SCHMIDT, commander of the 76th Infantry Division. The 10th came from the south, while the Schmidt doughboys swung into their "hook" on the north. The joint operation was responsible for the big entrapment of Nazis. Schmidt's division was credited by Vincent Sheean of the North American Newspaper Alliance with being the FIRST to use automatic breechloading mortars in revolving turrets. On March 1, Schmidt held a five-mile front between the Kyll and Prum Rivers. He captured Mohn, Butzweiler, Godendorf, and Edingen northwest of Trier.

The FIRST troops sent into Trier—birthplace of Karl Marx, and founded in the year 14 B.C.—were under orders directly given by Colonel William L. ROBERTS, of Parkersburg, West Virginia.

The entry occasioned intense artillery opposition by the enemy, with the response equally terrific on the part of the American invaders.

Lieutenant Colonel Jack J. RICHARDSON, of Athens, Texas, led the FIRST troops. The Texan and his armored outfit went through the center of the city and captured two Moselle River bridges.

Two officers shared the distinction of leading the FIRST tanks to roar into Trier. They were Lieutenant Colonel Raymond (John R.) RILEY, of Danville, Virginia, and Major Warren HASKELL, of Lee, Maine. Riley's spearheading tanks later destroyed a German supply train and captured Croffelbach, in April.

The Trier operation brought together three officers for the FIRST time since the trio had graduated in the same class at West Point in 1935. They were Richardson, and two other lieutenant colonels, Henry T. CHERRY, of Macon and Augusta, Georgia, and Russel MINER, of Binghamton, New York. The latter was in charge of General Malony's

supporting armored force, while Cherry commanded another battalion barging into the city.

The cathedral at Trier, the oldest in Germany, and reputedly the repository for a purple robe worn by Christ, was found badly damaged as a result of air raids.

Captain Robert W. WILSON, of Newark, New Jersey, raised the FIRST American flag over Trier. The emblem had been sent from Washington to Major Haskell.

General Malony's 94th Division completed the subjugation of Trier in the two-day operation.

RUHR REACHED

It took the 9th Army four days to reach the great Ruhr Basin after the D-day breakaway from the Roer.

The Germans were fleeing so fast they usually didn't take the trouble to pull their artillery with them. Among the most colorful American spearheaders was Brigadier General John H. CHURCH, of Frederick, Maryland. His "Task Force Church" with General Bolling's 84th Infantry Division was something of a legend while fighting at Anzio and Salerno and in Sicily and southern France.

That the outfit was not content to coast along solely on its reputation was revealed when Church "did it again" on February 27 when he spearheaded the FIRST troops to penetrate the Ruhr. He swept through Woldneil on that date, climaxing the drive two days later by capturing 800 prisoners. Even the cooks took 26 Nazis.

The great breakthrough between the Roer and Rhine was highlighted by one of Church's battalions, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ridgley B. BOND, of Baltimore, Maryland. His men rode into combat on captured German bicycles and wiped out an enemy battalion of 300, killing half of these Jerries.

FIGHTING FIRSTS

CITIES CAPTURED

The FIRST city in the Ruhr to be given up to the Americans was Muenchen-Gladbach, rail and manufacturing center of 127,000 population.

The conqueror was Major General Charles H. GERHARDT, of Macon, Georgia, and a native of Lebanon, Tennessee and chief of the 29th Infantry. His forces were a part of the 16th Corps commanded by Major General John ANDERSON, of Atlanta, Georgia.

Gerhardt's "Blue and Gray" Division walked twenty miles without armored support in reaching Muenchen-Gladbach on March 1 and suffered only five casualties while encountering minor opposition.

The FIRST company to enter the streets of this westernmost Ruhr city, known as the "Manchester of Germany," was led by Lieutenant Frank BISHOP, of Norman, Oklahoma. Major John C. GEIGLEIN, of Westminster, Maryland, commanded the FIRST battalion to go in. The seizure was preceded by 1,000 sorties of supporting warplanes. German soldiers were now surrendering by the thousands.

Resistance was bitter when Americans stormed into Krefeld, largest city in western Ruhr and twelve miles north of Gladbach. This steel and rail center of 170,000 and seat of the German silk industry, fell quickly, however, on March 2, after the 102d Infantry Division of General Keating got inside.

The FIRST regiment to reach the heart of Krefeld was led by Colonel Bernard F. HURLESS, of Atlanta, Georgia and Fairburg, Nebraska. During the drive from the Roer this outfit captured 2,000 enemy soldiers, and at Krefeld Hurless personally took nineteen Nazi troopers in tow.

General Bolling's "Railsplitters" Division followed the 102d into this 35th largest of German cities.

RHINE REACHED

March 2, 1945, proved to be one of the red-letter days of the European campaign. Arrival of the 9th Army on the western banks of the Rhine at that time was an event of wide significance in itself. But most impressive was the manner in which the troops slugged their way in the general direction of Berlin.

In one week the ten divisions of Simpson's force of 150,000 men had wiped out five Nazi infantry divisions and severely battered three panzer divisions.

During the advance from the Roer, a total of 15,500 enemy prisoners had been taken. More than 100,000 others were either killed in action or were fleeing across the Rhine. Western Rhur now belonged to the Allies.

The FIRST company to reach the Rhine was commanded by Lieutenant Robert PACKER, of Brooklyn, New York.

Neuss, a bomb-battered community of 60,000 population, was the FIRST city on the Rhine to fall to the Americans. The capture was achieved by Lieutenant Colonel John A. NORRIS, Jr., of Austin, Texas.

In connection with this Nazi reversal, the 83d (Thunderbolt) Infantry, commanded by Major General Robert C. MACON, of Washington, D. C., became the FIRST division to reach the Rhine. Almost at the same time, the 2d Armored Division of General White hit the banks of the great river south of Neuss.

Captain Francis OLIVER, of New York City, was the FIRST American officer to arrive at the Rhine. The FIRST platoon leader there was Lieutenant Charles WELCH, of Columbus, Ohio. The battalion of Lieutenant Colonel Leniel E. MacDONALD, of Tupelo, Mississippi, and the regiment commanded by Colonel Robert H. YORK, of Hartselle, Alabama, and a native of Birmingham in the same state, were others FIRST on the scene.

Neuss is an across-the-river suburb of Duesseldorf, having a population of 500,000. The Americans fought a heavy

battle along the approaches to the two bridges connecting the twin cities, but Eisenhower did not elect to seize the last-named industrial center until several weeks later.

The Americans tried in vain to save the Adolph Hitler Highway Bridge from destruction east of Krefeld. The enemy also blew up the Neuss-Duesseldorf span. Americans in the former operation became the FIRST invading soldiers to cross the Rhine since the Napoleonic wars. Nineteen men accomplished the feat on patrol missions. Their leaders were Captain George L. YOUNGBLOOD, of Charleston, South Carolina, and Lieutenant Guy E. AMSPOKER, of Macon, Georgia. In their seventy minutes on the bridge they were constantly exposed to enemy fire. The span was in flames, and the Americans were forced to return to the western shore. The Nazis blew up the bridge twenty minutes later, on March 4.

SIMPSON STROKE

Simpson's 9th Army made a junction with Canadian fighters immediately following the arrival at the Rhine. The forces of two nations were joined in the northwest corner of the Ruhr Basin.

This occurred while two battered enemy armies were being chased in their endeavor to escape across the Rhine on the northern flank of combat. The proceedings brought the 84th Infantry Division of General Bolling to that river. Captain William P. THOMPSON, of Carrollton, Kentucky, company commander, here claimed for the 84th the distinction of being the FIRST division of the 13th Corps to reach the Rhine north of Homburg.

Lieutenant Colonel Bidsey L. LERMAN, of Santa Monica, California, led the FIRST battalion to arrive.

Thompson's doughboys were the FIRST into the outskirts of Homburg, a west-bank suburb of Duisburg. This company was the most traveled of any outfit since the D-day crossing of the Roer, having advanced 35 miles (airline).

The 13th Corps spearheaders to the Rhine were com-

manded by Lieutenant General Alvan C. GILLEM, of Nogales, Arizona, and a native of Nashville, Tennessee.

The Nazi garrison at Homburg surrendered three hours after midnight on March 5. The capture of this manufacturing town of 35,000 population was credited to a regiment led by Colonel Charles E. HOY, of Chicago, Illinois. This unit was the nucleus of "Task Force Church," a legendary force which a headquarters communique had given credit for being the FIRST aggregation to penetrate the Ruhr Basin.

While holding the west approach of the Homburg Bridge, Hoy's forces captured Heinrich Kost, rich mine owner and the tenth-ranking Nazi party leader.

The two bridges at Homburg stretching to Duisburg were blown up by the enemy before General Bolling's forces could reach them.

POCKET PROCEDURE

The city of Rheinberg was now in the middle of a collapsing Rhine pocket and one of the main ferry objectives of 50,000 Nazis endeavoring to reach the eastern side of the Rhine. This fighting area was also known as the "Wessel pocket." One division engaged in ripping it asunder was the 5th Armored commanded by Major General Lunsford E. OLIVER, of Falls City, Nebraska. This was the FIRST reported intensive fighting experience encountered by the division in the European campaign. In the African invasion this general led a tank outfit which captured two airdromes, leading to the fall of Oran.

Capture of Rheinberg was achieved by the 35th Infantry Division, led by Major General Paul W. BAADE, of Ft. Wayne, Indiana, being the FIRST general to conquer an important German center following the junction with the Canadians.

Baade seized Sarreguemines, France, in December, and in the following month beat back a Nazi counterattack near Bastogne, Belgium, while attached to the 3d Army.

The 35th traveled 1,400 combat miles in seven months during 162 consecutive days on various fronts before capturing Rheinberg.

Captain Carl PISTER, of Wapato, Washington, led the FIRST tanks into Rheinberg.

COLOGNE CAPTURED

The way was opened on March 4 for the attack on Cologne when the 3d Armored Division of Major General Maurice ROSE, of Denver, Colorado, and a native of Middletown, Connecticut, swept to the west bank of the Rhine seven miles north of the city. The Americans as a result of this operation were well wedged between the enemy armies from Duesseldorf south to a comparatively short distance above Cologne.

Rose's famous division was the FIRST to assault the latter metropolis of 768,000 population, the fourth largest city in Germany. The outfit also won a race with two other divisions to be the FIRST to enter Cologne, on March 5.

The 3d Armored and the 104th Division of Major General Terry (Terrible Terry) ALLEN, of El Paso, Texas, and a native of Ft. Douglas, Utah, collaborated in the engulfment of forty suburban villages in their sweep to the city. Allen's outfit won in the competition to be the FIRST infantry division to reach Cologne.

Both of these units were parts of the 7th Corps commanded by Lieutenant General Joseph Lawton COLLINS, of New Orleans, Louisiana. His force was the FIRST to race across the Cologne Plain from the Roer River breakthrough. Collins' divisions had previously captured such strongholds as Cherbourg and Aachen.

The advance of the 3d Armored was so swift that 4,000 of the Nazi troopers, assigned to aid other divisions in the defense of the city, caught napping on the outside, were cut off and prevented from going in. Greeted by heavy machine-gun fire, doughboys under Colonel Gerald C. KEL-

LEHER, of Albany, New York, became the FIRST battalion to enter with the 104th Division.

Lieutenant Colonel L. L. DOAN, of Houston, Texas, spearheader of a task force of infantry and armor, led the FIRST column to cross the city limits. He entered from the north, being attached to the 3d Armored.

The FIRST company inside was led by Lieutenant Mervin B. TEIG, of Iowa Falls, Iowa.

There was house-to-house fighting all day. All but 1,000 of the enemy fled to the ruins of the old-town sector of Altstadt.

Lieutenant Colonel John WELBORN, of Southern Pines, North Carolina, commanded the FIRST Americans to assault the large railway yards.

The 25 square miles of Cologne fell completely into the invaders' hands on the following day, the 6th, when the German garrison fled to Bonn.

All five of the bridges here had been destroyed. The Rhine was now without a bridge from Bonn to Wessel, north of the Ruhr Basin.

The 8th Infantry of General Moore cleared the suburbs of Cologne and took over the big power station.

The city was 85 per cent destroyed. Allied destruction from the air had been even greater than that suffered by London. The famous old cathedral was the only building not severely damaged.

ROYALTY'S REMAINS

Cologne was the resting place of the bodies of Frederick the Great and Emperor Charlemagne. These were found hidden in a copper mine, to which the caskets of royalty had been removed from the original resting place at Potsdam. Other findings included the swaddling clothes of the infant Jesus and the robe of the Virgin Mary.

Captain Walker HANCOCK, of Gloucester, Massachusetts, was a leader in the recovery of the bodies and his-

torical relics. This officer, a sculptor educated in St. Louis, Missouri, had previously won the government's FIRST prize for designing the medal for meritorious achievement in flying while a private in a Louisiana camp.

Bonn, the birthplace of Beethoven, was captured by the 1st Infantry Division of General Andrus on the 9th. Fighting had started two days previously. The FIRST company to enter this ancient cultural and university city of 100,000 was led by Captain James WINTER, of Dresden, Kansas.

Resistance from Volksturm troops was strong. The enemy blew up the bridge there shortly before the capture. About half of the city had been destroyed by Allied air raids.

CHAPTER 12

FIRST CAMPAIGNING BEYOND RHINE

The handwriting on the wall spelling doom for Hitler's dreams became boldly legible when a great American coup resulted in the seizure of a bridgehead at Remagen on March 7.

The unexpected feat exposed the heart of Germany to uncompromising invasion. Access across the Rhine was gained in a surprising manner. Even Eisenhower's headquarters did not know what was taking place until the victory had been accomplished.

Making the drive to the Rhine so swiftly that the Nazis were caught totally unprepared, the 3d Corps, commanded by Major General John MILLIKIN, of Danville, Indiana, brought 1st Army troops suddenly to the banks of the river in the FIRST deliberate attempt to cross a bridge still intact.

Although the Allies were in control of the west bank as far north as Arnheim, in the Netherlands, there was no bridge left for a crossing—except at Remagen.

Divisional credit for the FIRST breaching of the Rhine went deservedly to Major General John W. LEONARD, of

San Antonio, Texas, and a native of Toledo, Ohio. The actual operation, however, was under the management of Major General William M. HOGE, of Boonville and Lexington, Missouri.

BRIDGE BREAKTHROUGH

One of the most momentous military parleys of the war was held within sight of the Ludendorff Bridge. General Hoge, in charge of Combat Command B, of Leonard's division, called two officers of a task force into consultation on the question whether a crossing should be attempted immediately. It was shortly after 3:30 o'clock in the afternoon. The other officers in the huddle were Major Murray DEVERS, of Hagarville, Arkansas, and Lieutenant Colonel Leonard ENGEMAN, of Minneapolis and Redwood Falls, Minnesota.

Although they knew the enemy was likely to order the destruction of the bridge any minute, the conferees gave the "go" sign to the troops at 3:50 P.M. What they did not know was that the Germans had set 4 o'clock as the time for the demolition.

Colonel Engeman gave the FIRST orders for the storming of the bridge. Major Devers' outfit was the FIRST battalion to engage in a battle on any span over the Rhine River since the days of Napoleon. The enemy attackers, of course, were for the most part not on the bridge but composed congregated forces firing from the east bank.

Sergeant Michael CHINCHAR, of Plymouth, Pennsylvania, was the FIRST American to set foot on the Ludendorff structure. He tarried to clean out a Nazi machine-gun nest, and the delay prevented him from being the first across.

The FIRST doughboy to get halfway over performed a heroic chore. He was Sergeant Eugene DORLAND, of Chicago, Illinois, and was credited with firing a shot which split a demolition wire, a feat reputedly contributing to the failure of the enemy to wreck the span.

A butcher boy from Holland, Ohio, Sergeant Alexander

A. DRABIK, won the race to be the FIRST to step on the east bank of the river. In a 1,200-foot dash he passed a number of others delayed in their progress. He was the leader of ten riflemen, and his heroic charge virtually completed the capture of the bridge.

Drabik was under the command of Lieutenant Carl TIMMERMAN, of West Point, Nebraska, whose company was the FIRST to go over; and the latter was also the FIRST officer to complete the perilous journey. Born in the Reich, this lieutenant had five uncles in the German Army.

COSTLY CARELESSNESS

The monumental German blunder in not wrecking the Remagen Bridge in time to prevent a crossing was to a large extent the fault of a drunken Nazi lieutenant assigned to set off the explosion. He was one of the first of the enemy captured, but that did not prevent an attempt by other alert defenders to blow up the span once the Americans began their drive across. A section of the bridge was torn up, but a faulty fuse cap was blamed for averting the explosion of hundreds of pounds of TNT, which would have brought disaster to the American spearheaders. Several Germans were executed for their carelessness at Remagen.

The FIRST American demolition task on the bridge was inaugurated by engineers under Lieutenant John MITCHELL, of Pittsburgh and Brentwood, Pennsylvania. The ripping out of wire network and repair of the damaged portion of the span was accomplished while enemy machine-gunners and riflemen were pouring fire in the direction of the combat workers.

Sergeant John FINDER, of Spencer, Indiana, was in charge of signal corpsmen in stringing the FIRST telephone line across the Ludendorff structure. Three men on this job toiled three days before they could make their work permanent, the delay in final installment being due to the destructiveness of hostile artillery.

The beachhead was established by two battalions of infantry and a tank company, the only units going over on the first day.

The FIRST tank across the bridge was driven by Sergeant Robert A. JONES, of McKee, Kentucky. The commander of this armored vehicle was Sergeant William J. GOODSON, of Rushville, Indiana.

Major James BAKER, of Columbia and Sikeston, Missouri, a medic, was in charge of the evacuation of the FIRST wounded soldiers brought back across the Rhine.

Sergeant Charles PENROD, of Portsmouth, Ohio, was the FIRST U. S. fighter to scale a cliff which was captured immediately following the first crossing.

The FIRST antiaircraft battalion to go over was commanded by Major Carl W. MORGAN, of Columbus, Texas.

Lieutenant Colonel Harry P. HARPER, of Rochester, Minnesota, was in charge of the FIRST field hospital to cross the bridge, and he went with a load of casualties in the FIRST glider on a hospitalization flight in Europe on another occasion.

In this connection Major Howard H. CLOUD, Jr., of Louisville, Kentucky, piloted the FIRST glider when the glider-ambulance service was inaugurated. This occurred two weeks after the bridgehead seizure when a transport plane dipped low over an airfield at Remagen and snatched up a glider filled with a dozen wounded men, who were then taken to an evacuation hospital.

A Piper Cub plane pilot, Major James TOWNSEND, of Kentucky, landed his craft in a pea patch to become the FIRST American flyer to come down in the FIRST American-held territory east of the Rhine.

CO-OPERATIVE CHAPLAIN

The bizarre phases of warfare usually crop up in most unexpected situations, and this fact was borne out when an Army chaplain accepted the surrender of the FIRST German

town on the east bank of the Rhine to fall into Allied hands.

The dominating figure in the event was Captain William GIBBLE, of Henryetta, Oklahoma.

The drama had its beginning when a panicky German medical functionary rushed from the town and begged the chaplain—the first man he encountered—to do something about the Nazi hospital, where 600 war wounded were being cared for. The negotiations ended with the town's capitulation to the American cleric.

Chaplains were on all war fronts, one of the most famous of whom was the pastor who inspired the great war song, "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition."

In Europe there was much controversy over the question of the identity of the FIRST chaplain to land in the invasion.

The doughboys lodged the claims, and among those singled out as the spearheaders—all reputedly coming down into the thick of the fighting with the skytroopers—were Captains Joseph A. ANDREJEWSKI, of Baltimore, Maryland, RAYMOND S. HALL, of Lowell, Massachusetts, William J. REID, of Rayville, Louisiana, George WOOD, Protestant, and Matthew CONNLEY, Catholic.

The FIRST Jewish chaplain killed on the Western Front was Captain Irving TEPPER, of Chicago, Illinois.

Major General William R. ARNOLD, of Peru, Indiana and Wooster, Ohio, was the FIRST of the Catholic faith to head all Army chaplains; and he was the FIRST Army chaplain ever promoted to the rank of major general. He served longer than any man in history in the post.

AIRFIELD ACTIVITIES

Builder of the FIRST U. S. airfield east of the Rhine was the 852d Aviation Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Arlon HAZEN, of Stillwater, Oklahoma. The strips were ready for use five days after the project had been inaugurated.

The FIRST pilot to land on the field was Major James

W. EGAN, of Hill City, South Dakota. Early in the war he was attached to the FIRST American fighter group to operate from Australia as well as New Guinea. He shot down his FIRST Jap plane while on his FIRST mission.

Major O. W. HANSEN, of College Springs, Iowa, flew the FIRST mission from the new airport, five days after the seizure of Remagen Bridge. Taking off at the same time to share in the pioneering feat was Captain Leo J. SOMMER, of La Crescenta (Los Angeles), California.

Commander of the FIRST unit to operate—the 363d Tactical Reconnaissance Group—was Lieutenant Colonel James W. SMELLEY, of Arcadia, Louisiana. These unarmed flyers made perilous trips to get topographical photos of enemy-held territory.

The field operations were officially initiated when the FIRST fighter-bombers (Thunderbolts) took off on a raid. The leader of the mission was Captain Harold W. DIFFENWIERTH, of Dade City, Florida.

The FIRST shuttle service for evacuating casualties east of the Rhine was inaugurated at the Remagen bridgehead. The FIRST glider pick-up technique in connection with the transportation of wounded soldiers, on European soil, involved C-47 towing planes under the command of Captain Donald HAUG, of Wenatchee, Washington. An average of 450 evacuees were flown out daily from the Remagen bridgehead.

More than a year before, Captain Herman RINTOUL, of Brooklyn, New York, had piloted a plane making the FIRST human pick-up from the ground.

Captain Edward L. JETT, of Baltimore, Maryland, was the FIRST officer to develop the technique in glider “snatch” pick-ups and landings under combat conditions.

WAR WOMEN

The FIRST woman to gain the headlines at the bridgehead was Lieutenant Suella BARNARD, of Waynesville and

Springfield, Ohio. A nurse, she rode on the FIRST glider picked up from the ground in the hospital-based evacuation operation.

Another Army nurse was the FIRST woman ever presented with a Soldier's Medal. She was Lieutenant Edith E. GREENWOOD, of North Dartmouth, Massachusetts. She was decorated for her heroism in saving patients from a hospital fire. Captain Mary L. PETTY, of Chicago, Illinois, led the FIRST group of Negro nurses to be assigned to Europe.

The FIRST woman doctor to enter the armed services was Major Margaret D. CRAIGHILL, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

During the last year of the war there were more than 150,000 women in uniform. Even before the Western Front was established, 41 feminine participants had been killed while on duty.

Betty BANDEL, of Tucson, Arizona, was the FIRST woman to be appointed lieutenant colonel in the Women's Army Corps.

Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall's "eyes and ears" was a woman, Lieutenant Colonel Florence C. NEWSOME, of Shawomet, Rhode Island. Assistant secretary of the general staff, she directed the sending of secret war messages to and from the battle sectors, and was the FIRST Rhode Island woman to become a Wac. She was also the FIRST woman ever to serve on the American Army's general staff.

A private telephone operator for General Eisenhower was the youngest Wac overseas and the FIRST to return to the United States after serving in Europe. She was Private Marjorie D. OLDS, of Dayton, Ohio.

Lieutenant Elizabeth M. PARKER, of Raleigh, North Carolina, led the FIRST group of Wacs to return to America, in connection with the Army's redeployment setup, following the cessation of hostilities in Europe.

Leader of all Wacs was Colonel Oveta C. HOBBY, of Houston, Texas. In private life a newspaper woman, she was the FIRST woman in the Army to receive the Distinguished

Service Medal. Lieutenant Colonel Anna W. WILSON, of Studio City, California, director of 10,800 Wacs in Europe, was the FIRST member of the corps to receive the Legion of Merit.

Lieutenant Anne W. TINGES, of Towson, Maryland, was the FIRST WAC officer to win the Purple Heart. This resulted from injuries suffered when she shielded a child from an exploding enemy bomb.

The FIRST Wac to be given the Air Medal posthumous award was Private Marjory L. BABINETZ, of Bairdford, Pennsylvania. She was killed in the crash of a dive bomber while broadcasting an appeal for recruits.

Major Mary BELL, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was the FIRST woman instructor appointed to the Army's command and general staff school.

The FIRST Japanese-American recruit in the WAC was Private Iris WATANABE, of Denver, Colorado.

Lieutenant Elizabeth M. LUTZ, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was the FIRST WAC veteran to be given a loan under the G. I. Bill of Rights.

BRIDGEHEAD BROADENED

Hodges' 1st Army gradually expanded the Remagen bridgehead, capturing 23 towns on the east bank of the Rhine in the four-day period following the Ludendorf span seizure.

On the west side of the river other elements negotiated the FIRST link-up with Patton's 3d Army when Andernach, a ferry crossing center, was captured on the 9th. The tank spearheaders (of the 11th Armored Division) in this operation were led by Major General (then Brigadier General) Holmes E. (High Explosive) DAGER, of Asbury Park and Union, New Jersey.

The junction gave the 1st, 3d, and 9th Armies sway over 100 miles of the Rhine's west bank from Andernach to Ossenberg, on the north.

The troops which had crossed the Rhine jumped off for

an all-out assault on the 12th. The FIRST big objective of the southern flank was the capture of Hoenningen, six miles south of Remagen. This phase of the fighting was undertaken by the 99th Infantry Division, commanded by Major General Walter E. LAUER, of New Jersey, and a native of Brooklyn, New York.

This officer's "Checkerboard Kids" held a 70-square-mile area south of the bridgehead, having crossed the river on the 10th. Antitank and antipersonnel mines were used by the enemy in the fierce battle for Hoenningen.

A prize scout in General Lauer's outfit was a full-blooded Navajo Indian, Private Clifford (The Chief) ETSITTY, of Mexican Springs, New Mexico. He was always the FIRST man out in more than a hundred patrol expeditions into enemy territory. While fighting on Attu Island, he killed forty Japs; he liquidated a half-dozen Nazis up to the Remagen campaign.

The Ludendorf Bridge at Remagen collapsed on March 13, as a result of a strain on the structure imposed by the severance of a main girder during the capture of the span. The occurrence was not disastrous, since a pontoon bridge had been built in the area by American engineers. The FIRST battalion to erect this kind of a span across the Rhine was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Harvey R. FRASER, of Elizabeth, Illinois. General Collins of the 7th Corps directed the building of the original floating bridge for the bridgehead, the span being erected in ten hours and eleven minutes by his engineer, Colonel Mason J. YOUNG.

SAARLAND STORMED

Meantime the Saar campaign in the southern area of the great Western Front, and the Ruhr Basin drive on the north, were beginning to take on a white heat.

Bradley's 12th Army Group on the central sector and Montgomery's northern group of Canadians, British, and Americans had eliminated all German troops west of the Rhine.

There remained the task of accomplishing the same on the front held by General Patch's 7th Army in the approaches to the Saar. Patton's 3d Army was now working around to the point of teaming up with the 7th in the closing stages of the Saar battle.

The major Saar offensive began March 15. The FIRST drive of Patch's forces since the Colmar-pocket success early in February was under the direction of General Jacob L. DEVERS, of York, Pennsylvania, commander of the Southern Group of Armies.

The 7th Army had been waiting for the signal to attack since the Western Front offensive began on February 23, while stationed less than two miles south of Saarbruecken.

The 63d (Blood and Fire) Divisions of Major General Louis E. HIBBS, of Washington, D. C., led the FIRST assault into the Saar.

The FIRST outstanding action of the famous 42nd (Rainbow) Division was undertaken in the Saar breakthrough. This reconstituted aggregation, of World War I renown, made its World War II bow in a big way in the Hardt Mountain sector south of Bitche, France. The commander was Major General Harry J. COLLINS, of Chicago, Illinois.

The 200-year-old fortress of Bitche was captured by the 100th Infantry Division of Major General Withers A. BURRESS, of Richmond, Virginia. This was the FIRST time any military outfit had been able to conquer the stronghold. The conquest was brought about in a few hours of combat when the enemy surprisingly offered only token opposition.

BACK YARD BREAKTHROUGH

The FIRST move of Patton's 3d Army to team up with the 7th in bringing about a squeeze on the great Saar Basin was inaugurated by the 20th Corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Walton H. WALKER, of Belton, Texas.

This Trier area operation by the so-called "Ghost Corps" was supplemented by a sensational dash farther north by the

crack 4th Armored Division, led by Major General Hugh J. GAFFEY, of Hartford, Connecticut, and a native of Austin, Texas. In a 75-mile breakthrough requiring 58 hours, he lunged through the enemy's "back yard," reaching the Rhine south of Coblenz two days before the 1st Army seized the Remagen bridgehead further north.

In the general attack toward the heart of the Saar the 94th Division of Major General Harry J. MALONY, of Lakemont and Dundee, New York, became the FIRST unit of Patton's Army to cross the Saar River.

The surge in the direction of the Rhine was highlighted at the outset of the stepped-up activities by the five spectacular crossings of the Lower Moselle River. Leader in this vital bridgehead extravaganza was Major General Manton S. EDDY, of Chicago, Illinois and Columbus, Ohio, commander of the 12th Corps whose 5th and 90th Divisions of Generals Irwin and Earnest established the jumping-off points. These brilliant moves upset the entire Nazi defense program. Hitler's strategists had been lulled into believing their salvation was to swing their largest troop elements in opposition to the 7th Army on the south side of the great Saar triangle of fighting. Patton took full advantage of the weakened enemy setup on the northern side of the salient.

COBLENZ CAPTURED

The northern tip of the Saar triangle was bashed in when the highway, rail, and river city of Coblenz fell to the 3d Army, on March 17. There the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle Rivers constituted the upper point of the geometrical figure formed by the fronts of the defending enemy armies.

Over-all direction of the attack was in charge of the 8th Corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Troy H. MIDDLETON, of Hazelhurst, Mississippi and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Previously he had led the FIRST division to liberate captured Americans in Sicily.

Reputedly the most beautiful city on the Rhine, Coblenz

was found in ruins by the 87th (Golden Acorn) Division, led by Major General Frank L. CULIN, Jr., of Tucson, Arizona, and a native of Seattle, Washington, when entry was made at 3 o'clock in the morning. Culin's division had accomplished its FIRST objective after its christening in actual warfare when the town of Walsheim was captured, sealing Aachen from the rest of Germany.

The FIRST Americans to enter the city formed a patrol of a battalion commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Perry CONANT, of Caro, Michigan. The scouting mission was performed during the night to get a line on the Nazi defenses.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert B. (Mike) MORAN, of Eagle Pass, Texas, led the FIRST troops to assault the great European wine center. As in the case of others that followed this group, the crossing (in ninety seconds) was made in assault boats.

House-to-house fighting ensued. Colonel Douglas SUGG, of Clayton, Missouri, led the FIRST regiment to go into the city. In earlier Pacific combat, Sugg had commanded troops which cleaned out the last Japs on Guadalcanal Island.

Only light opposition was encountered in the face of frontal amphibious attack. This ancient city of 60,000 population was shelled by the Germans from the east bank of the Rhine, but the resistance did not last long.

SAARBRUECKEN SEIZURE

The knock down-and-dragout fight of General Devers' southern front forces reached its climax on St. Patrick's Day in an all-out attack on the West Wall.

Patch's 7th Army here employed seven divisions, with 100,000 men. A complete breakthrough on the deepest point of all Siegfried Line belts was made in 48 hours. Towns fell by the dozens as the troops swept toward a union with Patton's 3d Army coming down pell-mell from the north.

A highlight of the March 19 proceedings was furnished by the 103d Infantry Division of Major General Anthony C. McAULIFFE, of Washington, D. C., who crossed the Palati-

nate border and personally captured the FIRST pillbox taken by his unit. He also accepted the capture of fourteen enemy soldiers.

Considerably west of this operation, the 7th Army captured the chief city of the Saar Basin—Saarbruecken—on the 20th. This capital city of 125,000 population fell to the 70th (Trailblazer) Division of Major General Allison J. BARNETT, of Hartford, Kentucky. It was this outfit that launched the FIRST action in the battle for the Saar breakthrough.

Only 1,000 inhabitants remained when the Americans took over at Saarbruecken, which had been under siege more than three months.

Zweibruecken, another nearby West Wall stronghold, of 16,000 population, fell on the same day to the 3d Division, commanded by Major General John W. (Iron Mike) O'DANIEL, of Newark, Delaware and Atlanta, Georgia. The 3d was the FIRST infantry division in the war to receive the Presidential Unit Citation.

Another assiduous officer under Patch was Major General John W. DAHLQUIST, of St. Paul, and a native of Minneapolis, Minnesota. He personally captured a Nazi soldier while at the head of his 36th (Texas) Division going into the border city of Wissembourg, historic municipality and gateway to the Palatinate. His division, which was the FIRST to go ashore in the invasion of Italy, fought out of Alsace to capture Haguenau, with the support of armor for the FIRST time in this region, and also conquered Kapsweyer on the 20th.

A reverberating event on the same day was the linking of the 3d and 7th Armies. The FIRST junction occurred twelve miles west of Kaiserlautern, and the divisions involved were the 6th Armored, led by Major General Robert W. GROW, of Sibley, Iowa, and the 26th (Yankee) Infantry Division of Major General Willard S. PAUL, of Worcester and Shrewsbury, Massachusetts.

RECORD RAMPAGE

March 20 was acclaimed the greatest day in the history of the 3d Army of General Patton. Running wild, this armored aggregation captured more than 15,000 of the enemy.

The German 7th Army was liquidated. Most of the enemy 1st was entrapped.

Four great Saar cities were doomed by the onrush.

The squeeze of the fleeing enemy was completed by the junction of the 3d and 7th Armies.

The epochal encirclement of the Saar Basin had been given a preview the day before when the 65th Division cleared Saarlautern, one of the 45 towns captured in the Saarland, Palatinate, and Rhenish Hesse Province.

Organized defense of the Saar by the Germans was no longer possible after the seizure of Kaiserlautern (population 61,000) by the 80th Infantry Division of Major General Horace L. McBRIDE, of Elgin, Nebraska, whose "Blue Ridge" outfit had earlier been the FIRST division to contact the isolated garrison at Bastogne.

The 10th Armored Division of Major General William H. MORRIS, Jr., of Washington, D. C., drove the FIRST troops through Kaiserlautern but didn't stop in its whirlwind drive, going on to capture Landau and the capital city of the Palatinate, Speyer.

Morris' famed task force, led by Lieutenant Colonel Henry T. CHERRY, of Augusta and Macon, Georgia, was the FIRST unit to speed through Kaiserlautern.

This city had been the supply hub of the Nazi armies in the Saar.

Twenty-five infantrymen of McBride's division, led by Sergeant Byron HOOVER, of Chicago, Illinois, were the FIRST to enter, and they employed only one grenade to capture the place. The missile went through the window of a building where the city's "defenders" were holed up. The doughboys captured a Nazi colonel, four majors, five captains, ten lieutenants, twenty non-coms, and sixty-six privates to complete the seizure.

The FIRST regiment inside was led by Colonel N. A. COSTELLO, of Arlington, Virginia.

TWIN THRUSTS

The fluidity of the forces conquering the Saar was demonstrated in the 3d and 7th Armies' twin operation at Worms. Both of these great units shared in the seizure of Worms, one of the most famous towns on the Rhine.

The capture was performed by Patton's 4th Armored, commanded by General Gaffey. Soon afterwards Patch's 6th Armored of General Grow came in and established occupation forces.

Lieutenant Colonel Embury D. (Simon) LA GREW, of Lexington, Kentucky, led his battalion into Worms (population 47,000), location of a famous cathedral, to become the FIRST unit of the 7th Army to reach the Rhine inside Germany.

The FIRST flag unfurled under these circumstances was hoisted by Lieutenant Colonel Frank BRITTON, of Hartford, Connecticut, at Rheinduerkheim, a suburb of Worms. These spearheading units had dashed through the Bavarian Palatinate in two days.

Captain James O. BROWN, of St. Louis, Missouri, led the FIRST troops into Gruenstadt, near Worms, in a procedure involving the capture of 400 Germans.

FINAL FIGHTING

Another jackpot was hit in the seizure of Ludwigshafen by the 94th Division of General Malony, spearheaded by the tanks of Major General Roderick Allen's 12th Armored forces. A great chemical center on the west bank of the Rhine, it was linked with its twin city, Mannheim, on the other side of the river, the two having a combined population of 427,000.

An additional junction of the 3d and 7th Armies oc-

curred on the outskirts of Ludwigshafen, with Lieutenant John E. FRENCH, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, leading the FIRST of Patch's patrols to contact Patton's forces in this area.

Mainz was the scene of the FIRST fanatical resistance offered by the enemy in the final, crushing strike by Americans in the Saar Basin. Reached on March 20 by General Gaffey's Fourth Armored Division, this capital of the Rhenish Hesse Province, having a population of 160,000, did not fall until the 23d. The 90th Infantry Division, commanded by Major General Herbert L. EARNEST, of White Stone, Virginia, and a native of Richmond of the same state, broke into the heart of the city after being stalled by stubborn defenders for two days on the outskirts. The 90th later was the FIRST division to enter Czechoslovakia.

The Saar Valley was declared won on the 21st. The two victorious armies had taken 88,000 prisoners in the nine-day campaign.

BRIDGEHEAD BRILLIANCY

The second bridgehead over the Rhine was brilliantly established by Patton's 3d Army in a surprise plunge on March 22.

The moonlight crossing near Openheim and north of Worms was accomplished without the loss of a man.

Infantrymen carrying their own assault boats spearheaded the crossing. The 5th Division, commanded by Major General Le Roy (Red) IRWIN, of Ft. Monroe, Virginia and Washington, D. C., was the FIRST large unit to reach the other side.

It was the twentieth river-jumping in Europe for this "Red Diamond" division.

The FIRST amphibious operation ever undertaken across the Rhine was particularly creditable from the standpoint of transportation planning, which was under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Richard L. McKEE, of Williamsport,

Pennsylvania. He carried out the traffic and ferrying plans smoothly under the handicap of only 36 hours' advance notice of his assignment.

Captain Harry M. (Pete) SMITH, of Georgetown, Kentucky, led the FIRST wave of doughboys across the river.

The FIRST corporal to hit the east shore was Richard E. ROSE, of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Lieutenant Irvin S. JACOBS, of Hayes, Kansas, commanded the FIRST company to go over.

The FIRST regimental crossing was made by units under Colonel Paul S. BLACK, of San Francisco, California.

FLYING FORCES

Air-ground teamwork was an essential phase of Patton's Openheim bridgehead operation. The Air Force details were directed, in this FIRST bridgeless assault crossing of the Rhine in history by Major General Otto P. (Opie) WEYLAND, of Hempstead, Texas and Washington D. C., commander of the 19th Tactical Air Command.

Much of the success enjoyed by Patton in his dash across France in the year preceding the Moselle-Rhine campaign had been due to the vital air cover furnished by his flying Texas teammate.

Joining the thousands of infantrymen of the 12th Corps of General Eddy, on the other side, the armored forces were for the most part ferried across with the aid of Navy water craft. The spearheaders were the tankmen of General Gaffey's 4th Armored Division. Lieutenant Langdon (Spearhead) SMITH, of Laramie, Wyoming, commanded the FIRST tank across. Previously, this lieutenant had won the distinction of taking the FIRST 12th Corps "iron horse" over the German border.

Pacemakers in the lightning thrust of Gaffey's division after the vaulting of the Rhine were two legendary task forces led by a shirt manufacturer of Spartanburg, South Carolina, Harold COHEN, and a former West Point football star, Creighton W. (Abe) ABRAMS, of West Newton,

Massachusetts. Both were lieutenant colonels and commanders of battalions extraordinary.

Cohen's so-called "raiders" had been the FIRST men to reach the Rhine in Patton's speedy dash in the general direction of Frankfort. Abrams, known as the "silent man" because of his reluctance to inform his superior officers of his incredible feats, had led the FIRST column into Bastogne when the trapped airborne division was contacted.

The Abrams-Cohen team spearheaded a furious forty-mile drive from the east bank of the Rhine to the Main River. There a bridge leading across to Aschaffenburg was seized. Bypassing Frankfort, the 4th Armored was now halfway across Germany and only 140 miles from Czechoslovakia.

The battle for Central Europe was now beginning.

EUROPEAN EXTRAVAGANZA

Establishment of a third American bridgehead across the Rhine was one of the most elaborate affairs of the entire war. Europe had never seen anything approaching it in size since France had been stormed from across the English Channel.

There were invasion by airborne troops, crossings by infantry in boats and over quickly erected pontoon bridges, and participation by the U. S. Navy in the ferrying operations. The troops of four nations staged the extravaganza—British, Canadian, French, and American.

The Northern Group of Armies (the 21st), under British Field Marshal Montgomery, spearheaded the operation in an 8 P.M. getaway on March 23. American participation began at 2 A.M., on the 24th, when the 9th Army under Lieutenant General William H. (Texas Bill) SIMPSON, of Weatherford, Texas, started over in alligators, buffaloes, and other amphibious craft.

The FIRST U. S. Navy units ever employed in teaming up with the Army in an operation along the Lower Rhine were directed by Rear Admiral William J. WHITESIDE, of Richmond Hill, New York, and his chief aid in directing

the flow of landing craft was Lieutenant Commander Willard T. PATRICK, of Newark, New Jersey.

Simpson's crack aggregation had been the FIRST American Army to reach the Rhine—on March 2—and it had conducted the FIRST mop-up of enemy troops west of the Rhine in any of the respective arenas of ground operation.

The FIRST Army corps to go into action in the Rhine crossing was the 13th, commanded by Lieutenant General Alvan C. GILLEM, Jr., of Nogales, Arizona, and a native of Nashville, Tennessee.

STERLING SPEARHEADERS

Assigned to a spearheading role, the 30th Infantry Division of Major General Leland S. HOBBS, of Rutledge, Pennsylvania, and a native of Gloucester, Massachusetts, was the FIRST to take off in the 9th's crossing.

These so-called "Roosevelt's Shock Troops" went on to break through Hitler's open country north of the Ruhr Basin. On the first day this sterling outfit's 120th Regiment, commanded by Brigadier General (then Colonel) Hammond D. BIRKS, of Chicago, Illinois was credited with the deepest penetration of any unit in the division.

The FIRST regiment across the river was led by Colonel Walter M. JOHNSON, of Butte and Missoula, Montana. This officer was a legendary figure among Hobbs' foot soldiers, since he usually assumed the role of spearheader for the division and often bore the brunt of the enemy's initial attacks.

The 30th completed the building of a pontoon bridge in fourteen hours and fifteen minutes after the crossings began. A treadway structure was later erected in ten hours and eleven minutes. These were two of the seven spans built quickly by Allied engineers in the program to step up the crossings at the bridgehead, which had grown in two days to a length of 31 miles.

No less dramatic than the feats of the 30th was the surge of the 79th Division, commanded by Major General Ira T.

WYCHE, of Oracoke and Pinehurst, North Carolina, second outfit to take off in the Rhine operation.

Wyche's adventurous footsloggers were the FIRST to plunge southward deep into the Ruhr. Four days of advance were highlighted by the seizure of three great war factories, including the Thyssen Steel Works at Hamborn and the Ruhrchemie synthetic oil refinery. Fighters in the 313th Regiment of Colonel Edwin M. VAN BIBBER, of Bel Air, Maryland, were the FIRST infantrymen to enter Hamborn, following flame-throwing British tanks into the city. Wyche's forces at this time were in control of that part of the Ruhr Valley south to the Rhein-Herne Canal, including the north portion of the great metropolis of Duisburg.

The 9th Army's breakthrough occurred on the 30th at Sweckel, eight miles north of Essen. Simpson's forces were able to fight past furious resistance because of the stand of the 8th Armored Division, under Major General John M. DEVINE, of Highland Falls and West Point, New York. Here the latter fought the FIRST important battle of the new Rhine bridgehead.

SPECTACULAR SKY SHOW

The biggest sky-train in history—500 miles long—started its momentous journey at H-hour plus 8 of America's D-day lunge across the Lower Rhine.

The FIRST air invasion of Germany was carried out by the 1st Airborne Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Lewis H. BRERETON, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Major General Floyd L. PARKS, of Greenville, South Carolina, and a native of Louisville, Kentucky, was the chief of staff of the operation, having after the end of the European war been named the FIRST American commander of Berlin when the U. S. occupation troops went in.

A total of 1,572 troop planes with hundreds of gliders in tow streaked across the sky when, for the FIRST time, C-47s went into combat with two gliders attached instead of one. Altogether 5,940 aircraft took part in the proceedings.

The FIRST swarm of aircraft to drop their loads was led by Colonel Frank McNEES, of St. Paul, Minnesota. With this outfit was Lieutenant Marvin CABLE, of Cedar Vale, Kansas, who brought down the FIRST C-47 to land in the Reich when he picked up the 250,000th patient in the European Theater of Operations to be evacuated by air.

Around four in the afternoon of invasion day, paratroopers made initial contact with the British 2d Army, five miles beyond the Rhine and immediately north of Wessel. By 6 P.M., the joined forces had seized all objectives and captured 4,000 prisoners.

Lieutenant General James H. DOOLITTLE, of Washington, D. C. and St. Louis, Missouri, and a native of Alameda, California, hero of the FIRST raid on Tokyo, took part in the Rhine bridgehead operation. This 8th Air Force commander here carried out the FIRST supply-assistance mission ever attempted from the air in Germany in support of paratroop invaders.

The accomplishment of the skytroopers in teaming up with the 9th Army's ground forces past the east bank of the Rhine brought back memories of the performances of a predecessor noted for his aviation pioneering. He was Major General William C. LEE, of Dunn, North Carolina. One of the early commanders of the 101st Airborne, the southerner previously had organized the FIRST American school of Army parachute troops. He moved to Europe late in 1943 and became one of the great planners of paratroop campaigns on the Western Front.

Participating for the FIRST time in an aerial invasion, the 17th Airborne Division of Major General William M. MILEY, of Starkville, Mississippi, and a native of Ft. Mason, California, was the keystone American air unit in the sky-troop offensive operations.

MARCH MOP-UP

The enemy no longer had any foothold west of the Rhine River when the 7th Army of Lieutenant General Alexander

M. (Sandy Pat) PATCH, of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and a native of Ft. Huachua, Arizona finished mopping up the stragglers in the Hardt Mountain area around the 25th of March.

The FIRST crossing of the Rhine by the 7th was accomplished by the 15th Corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Wade H. HAISLIP, of Reisterstown, Maryland, and a native of Woodstock, Virginia. This event put all of Eisenhower's armies east of the Rhine, with the exception of the French Army which vaulted the river six days later. Haislip took 60,000 men across in 36 hours.

Assault boats, ferries, and amphibious craft were used, and a bridgehead fifteen miles wide was established between Mannheim and Gernsheim on the 26th and 27th.

A link-up was accomplished with Patton's 3d Army near Darmstadt on the 28th.

Considered remarkable was the feat of wiping out sixty miles of the Siegfried Line in seven days' time, without the necessity of a major battle. Major General Roderick ALLEN, of Marshall, Texas, commander of the 12th Armored (Hellcat) Division made the FIRST breakthrough in the assault on the tough East Wall, while fighting through Odenwald Forest.

Mannheim, a great chemical center, and Heidelberg fell in the last days of March to the 7th Army, the latter town being captured by the "Blood and Fire" Division of General Hibbs.

BRIDGEHEAD BREAKOUT

There still remained the tough task of reducing all of the Siegfried Line East Wall. A valiant contributor to this goal on the Central Front was the 5th Corps (of Hodges' Army), commanded by Major General Clarence R. HUEBNER, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Bushton, Kansas.

This 1st Army outfit paced the breakthrough out of the Remagen bridgehead on March 26. The FIRST town of importance to fall was Limburg (population 32,000) on the

Lahn River. The conquest was made by the 9th Armored Division of General Leonard. Other elements formed a junction with Patton's 3d Army on the following day, south of Coblenz. Hodges' northern flank drove northward with the objective of outflanking the Ruhr Valley.

German prisoner-of-war camps were now being encountered. More than 2,000 Allied captives, including 116 Americans, were liberated at Limburg.

At Heppenheim on the same day (the 27th), the 7th Army freed 290 wounded U. S. soldiers and 810 of other countries. Sergeant Robert H. GOODMAN, of Kankakee, Illinois, led the FIRST troops to enter the hospital where the casualties were found.

Weeping men greeted the 3d Army when 1,277 American prisoners and more than 3,723 of other nationalities were rescued from a horror camp near Siegenhain two days after the Heppenheim experience.

These U. S. soldiers had been captured in the Battle of the Belgium Bulge. The FIRST officer to take part in the liberation was Captain James FINLEY, of Evanston, Illinois.

Among the prisoners set free was Lieutenant Frank NEWTON, of Cameron, Texas. He was the FIRST American pilot of a B-24 plane to be shot down in Europe. His craft had been wrecked while flying over Crete, on August 21, 1942. With him in the air mishap was his bombardier, Lieutenant James ALEXANDER, Jr., of Lawrenceville, Illinois, who was also liberated from this camp in the Frankfort area.

FRANKFORT FALLS

The Central Front's three armies, under General Omar N. BRADLEY, of Moberly, Missouri, and a native of Clark of the same state, had linked up to form a solid front as the March campaign ended.

The 1st Army drove south and met the 3d as the latter was mopping up Frankfort. Other elements of the former

also plunged north to join with the 9th at the back door of the Ruhr Basin almost at the same time.

The drive of tank forces into Frankfort on the Main came with sudden impact on March 26. Pacing the attack on the approaches to Germany's ninth largest city (population 547,000) was the 4th Armored division, now under the command of Major General William M. HOGE, Sr., of Boonville and Lexington, Missouri.

The Missourian's flare for seizing bridges was demonstrated again when he struck the FIRST blow leading up to the assault on Frankfort by taking over the damaged span standing in the way of the American drive toward the city from the southwest. Nineteen days earlier this general had captured the bridge over the Rhine at Remagen.

Patton's troops fought through Frankfort in house-to-house progress while opposed by fanatical Elite Guard soldiers and hundreds of Nazi police and other noncombat elements. The 5th Infantry of General Irwin and the 6th Armored commanded by General Grow, the latter being the first to drive in, shared in the conquest of Frankfort. Both divisions were under the 12th Corps of General Eddy.

The 90th Infantry of General Earnest teamed with Hoge in outflanking Frankfort.

Lieutenant Colonel Howard D. CRISWELL, of Washington, D. C., became the FIRST military governor of the city.

Another important seizure was accomplished by Major General Horace L. McBRIDE, of Elgin, Nebraska, in the same general sector of fighting. His 80th Infantry Division captured Wiesbaden, resort city of 175,000 population, on the 28th, climaxing an unusual experience. Taking off from the west bank of the Rhine, this outfit also crossed the Main, becoming the FIRST division to vault two rivers in one day during the late March breakthrough of Patton's forces.

Among other 3d Army spearheaders in the same rapid drive was the 11th Armored Division of Brigadier General Charles KILBURN, of Silver City, New Mexico. This unit

came to within 200 miles of Berlin while plunging ahead east of Frankfurt at the end of March.

Kilburn's outfit made its FIRST attack of the war on the LAST day of 1944 in the Bastogne, Belgium, area.

CHAPTER 13

FIRST PHASE OF GERMANY'S COLLAPSE

A series of staggering assaults in the last three days of March, 1945, sealed the doom of Hitler's once great army in the west of Germany.

Converging on all sides of the rich Ruhr Basin, the American 1st and 9th Armies of Hodges and Simpson, respectively, trapped tens of thousands of the enemy in one of the greatest running battles of the war.

Joining in this colossal encircling movement was the southern flank of Marshal Montgomery's British and Canadian units, whose tanks pursued fleeing enemy forces across the Westphalian Plain. The bulk of the northern 21st Army Group, however, still faced well-organized resistance farther on. The same was true of Patch's 7th Army on the extreme south of the long Western Front. A second potent German Army was in the latter's path.

Patton's 3rd Army was plunging unchecked toward Czechoslovakia.

The hectic Ruhr proceedings of the 9th Army were highlighted by a sensational advance along the northern edge of the valley on the part of the 2nd Armored ("Hell on Wheels") Division of Major General Isaac D. WHITE, of Des Moines, Iowa, and a native of Petersboro, New Hampshire. This same tank general later led the FIRST Americans to cross the Elbe River.

Most of the great industrial cities of the Ruhr were bypassed.

However, Duisburg, a Rhine port of 431,000 population, was entered by other elements of the 9th Army on the 29th. The Volkssturm put out white flags, but the defiant defenders had other ideas.

With the city still holding out five days later, the 79th Division of Major General Ira T. WYCHE, of Ocracoke and Pinehurst, North Carolina, maneuvered a truce. The FIRST Allied serviceman to enter the city unmolested was Lieutenant Christopher M. GOOCH, Jr., of Columbus, Mississippi, and a former Tennessean. Going in blindfolded, as was the case of all others on this special mission, this officer failed to talk the Nazi commandant into surrendering in a four-hour parley. Wyche had been the FIRST Allied infantry general to cross the Seine River in earlier warfare.

Three U-boats were captured in the Duisburg dock area before the enemy rejected this and one other proposal to give up the city.

OCTOPUS OPERATION

The enemy forces within the Ruhr were now being squeezed by an octopus whose tentacles—represented by many converging Allied divisions of three inspired armies—were beginning to embrace all escape borders on the north, east, and south.

Racing to meet the troops coming down from above, the 1st Army suddenly wheeled from its eastward course and plunged north beyond the eastern end of the Ruhr. The FIRST intimation of this strategy was given when the 9th Armored Division of Major General John W. LEONARD, of San Antonio, Texas, and a native of Toledo, Ohio, whirled around from Giessen, which town was designated as “elbow” of the operation.

Another arm of the octopus was the 7th Armored, commanded by Major General Robert W. HASBROUCK, of Washington, D. C. and Kingston, New York. This outfit, which previously had been the FIRST tank division to cross

the Seine River, made a twenty-mile jump in crossing the Elder River and capturing Fritzlar (182 miles from Berlin), as well as Alt Wildungen on the Wilde River.

Creation and development of the so-called "Rose Pocket" contributed the climaxing clincher blow in this campaign. Prime mover in this dramatic military act was Major General Maurice ROSE, of Denver, Colorado, and a native of Middletown, Connecticut. The unit's advance around the east end of the Ruhr was the fastest of the war. During the hours of daylight Rose's spearheaders charged a distance of 55 miles over open roads. It was the 3d Armored which, six months earlier, had captured the FIRST town to fall in the Reich—Rotgen.

All activities in this red-hot sector now were centered around Paderborn, the "Fort Knox of Germany" and railroad gateway to Berlin. Rose's division entered the town on the 30th.

DOUBLE DRAGNET

The greatest Allied victory of the war in Germany up to this time was made possible by the historical double envelopment of the Ruhr, which became a reality on March 31-April 1, when the 1st and 9th Armies were linked eighteen miles east of Paderborn.

The authors of this story-book amalgamation were General White (9th Army), commander of the Hell on Wheels 2nd Armored Division, and Brigadier General Doyle O. HICKEY, of Camden, Arkansas, leader of Rose's combat command column of the 3d Armored Division in the 1st Army. This FIRST junction of elements of Simpson's and Hodges' armies occurred at Lippstadt.

Subordinates who nevertheless loomed large in the picture of the encirclement of the Rhur by their respective spearheading roles were Lieutenant Colonels Walter RICHARDSON, of Beaumont, Texas, Prentice (Iron Mike) YEO-MANS of Syracuse, New York, and John WELBORN, of Southern Pines, North Carolina.

All three of these great task-force leaders gained renown on many of the fronts because of their "FIRSTS."

The leading role in General White's link-up feat, which was made possible by its historic breakthrough and a notable thirty-mile dash, was performed by Colonel Sidney R. HINDS, of Lynchburg, Virginia and Nashville, Tennessee. His regiment was the FIRST unit to contact the 1st Army spearheading group.

This officer also became the conqueror of Ahlen (population 30,000), where there were fourteen military hospitals. Following the surrender, Ahlen became the FIRST open city in Germany.

Paderborn, the focal point in the severance of the Ruhr from the remainder of the Reich, held out for days as a result of fanatical resistance by SS (Elite Guard) defenders.

General Rose, one of the greatest tank commanders of the war, was killed in action during the final stages of the Ruhr envelopment.

Hamm, "back door" of the Ruhr and the greatest rail center in Europe, fell on April 2 to the 83d Infantry Division of Major General Robert C. MACON, of Washington, D. C. Less than two weeks later this general established the FIRST bridgehead east of the Elbe River.

NORWEGIAN NARRATIVE

One of the great problems of the European war picture, having a more or less direct bearing on the bitter struggle in central and southern Europe, was the occupation of Norway by 400,000 Nazi troops.

Decision to do something about it was reached in mid-1944. A limited showdown came while the Allies were strengthening their trap for the collapsed enemy troops in the Ruhr Basin.

The FIRST Allied invasion of Hitler's "northern redoubt" was a "pocket" affair, though extremely hazardous, and under the tutelage of Major General William J. (Wild Bill) DONOVAN, of Buffalo, New York, director of the Office of Stra-

tegic Services. The expedition, launched April 2, 1945, was kept secret until a month after the conclusion of European hostilities.

For months the Allies had feared the enemy would sweep its forces out of southern Norway and attack the offensive forces on the continent from the rear. Then there was the predicament of overcoming the occupation armies even if they remained inactive.

The FIRST plan for carrying aid to the Norwegian underground as a preliminary to more forceful proceedings was executed under the direction of Brigadier General Earl S. HOAG, of Sioux City, Iowa and Miami, Florida, Air Transport Command chief in Europe.

This so-called "carpetbagger" undertaking, inaugurated in July, 1944, was put in the hands of Colonel Bernt BALCHEN, of Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, and a native of Norway. One of the great heroes of notable rescue feats during the war on widespread fronts, this flyer "carried the ball" in the FIRST operations from the air in contacting and organizing the underground and keeping them supplied with arms. Spies and saboteurs were also dropped.

The FIRST plane lost in these operations cost the life of the commander, Lieutenant Colonel Keith N. ALLEN, of Washington, D. C. Some weeks earlier he had gained wide attention by piloting an old C-47 to retrieve a German V-2 rocket bomb which had fallen in Sweden, being the FIRST American to gain possession of one of the explosive devices. He flew the "vengeance" missile to England, where the Allies were able to investigate its secrets for the FIRST time.

INVASION INCIDENTS

Attempts to land American skytroopers in Norway were begun in January, but owing to extremely severe weather conditions the FIRST successful dropping of paratroopers was not achieved until the April "pocket" invasion became a reality. The soldiers were under the leadership of Major William COLBY, of St. Paul, Minnesota.

Commander of the FIRST American ski paratroopers ever to engage in combat, the Minnesotan never had more than 24 men at his disposal. Encountering atrocious winter weather, the force often came to grips with the enemy and, during the forty days of operations, always evaded their pursuers.

No. 1 assignment was the cutting of the north-south railways to prevent the enemy from shifting to the Western Front. A vital bridge was blown up on the first day after a ski trip of 100 miles.

Allied headquarters had planned a full-scale invasion as a follow-up of the "pocket" venture. This never took place, because the hostile occupation forces surprisingly gave up docilely when the fighting war ceased.

The FIRST American attack ever made on the enemy in Norway was from the air, executed by Lieutenant Robert D. METCALF, of Sacramento, California, bombardier on the Fortress "Spitfire," in a 1,200-mile round-trip mission on July 24, 1943.

Another regular visitor dropping "calling cards" was the B-17 "Knockout Dropper." The pilot, whose Fortress became the FIRST of its category to complete fifty missions with the 8th Air Force, was Lieutenant John P. MANNING, of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Captain Robert M. LOSEY, of Hollywood, California, the FIRST U. S. officer killed in World War II, lost his life at Dombas, Norway, while serving as an official observer in his capacity as a meteorologist, on April 21, 1940.

WESTPHALIAN WARFARE

While other 9th Army troops tarried to insure the elimination of the Ruhr "pocket," several divisions sped to the northeast across Westphalia in the northern Germany battle. They were the only forces on the Western Front, barring the British, driving directly east in the direction of Berlin.

Muenster, a great Westphalian prewar railway center of 50,000 population, became the FIRST provincial capital city

to bow to the Americans after the northern-flank breakthrough beyond the Ruhr Basin. The capture was executed by Major General William N. (Uncle Bud) MILEY, of Starkville, Mississippi, and a native of Ft. Mason, California, commander of the 17th Airborne Division.

Trucks were used by spearheaders storming the city. Two regiments, however, went in aboard British tanks, the FIRST occurrences of this kind in the capture of a large Westphalian city. The commanders of these units were Colonels James W. COUTTS, of Kennett, Missouri, and James R. PIERCE, of Troy, Pennsylvania.

In charging the Goering Barracks, the Americans captured 76 Germans cornered in subterranean tunnels.

Speediest of all of Simpson's army in this early April thrust was the 5th Armored Division of Major General Lunsford E. OLIVER, of Falls City, Nebraska. This tank outfit was the FIRST to reach the Weser River, the next-to-last important waterway on the high road to Berlin. The plunge was made to Bad Oeynhausen, 58 miles south of Bremen.

The troops of Generals White and Hobbs crossed this stream on April 5. Captain James McADAMS, of Birmingham, Alabama, commanded engineer forces which built the FIRST American bridge across the Weser.

The establishment of bridgeheads on the east side of this river forced a 75-mile flight of the Germans, resulting in their taking a stand on the Elbe River banks.

April, 1945, can be recorded as the red-letter month of the 75th Infantry Division in European fighting. Commanded by Major General Ray E. PORTER, of Fordyce, Arkansas, this aggregation made a dramatic crossing of the Dortmund-Ems Canal in the Muenster area on the 4th. This was after a drive across the northern reaches of the Ruhr River and was followed by the capture of the towns of Haltern, Dattelan, Eckern, and Luetten. The drive was climaxed by the seizure of a huge aluminum plant at Waldrop.

The 75th had been the FIRST in Army history to be activated in Missouri (at Ft. Leonard Wood).

THURINGIAN TANK THRUST

Patton's 3d Army started storming across the waistline of Germany early in April after securing Frankfort. The tanks began rolling ominously toward Czechoslovakia and Austria.

A group of Army newspaper men who found Frankfort too badly battered for their purposes while traveling with General Irwin's 5th Division wrote a startling episode in the chronicles of European warfare. They drove forty miles to Pfungstadt, which they understood had been occupied by American forces. The information was erroneous but the five undaunted journalists plunged in and captured the town.

Here was issued the FIRST American newspaper to come off the presses in Germany—the *Stars and Stripes*. The publisher was Lieutenant Robert L. MOORA, of Montclair, New Jersey, and former New York City newsman.

U. S. tanks were at the edge of Thuringian Forest on April 2. The FIRST outfits reported reaching the Werra River were the 6th and 11th Armored Divisions. The latter was commanded by Major General Holmes E. (High Explosive) DAGGER, of Union and Asbury Park, New Jersey. This put the 3d Army 155 miles southwest of Berlin and 90 miles from the Czech frontier.

Fulda, a great Catholic shrine city of 27,000 population, was captured by the 26th (Yankee) Division of Major General Willard S. PAUL, of Worcester and Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. Two weeks previously, this outfit had become the FIRST 3d Army division to link up with the 7th Army.

The Nazis put up their toughest struggle in the path of any 3d Army advance in Germany before giving up Kassel, an arsenal city of 217,000 inhabitants. This capital of Hesse-Nassau was subdued in three days of street fighting by the 80th (Blue Ridge) Division, of Major General Horace L. McBRIDE, of Elgin, Nebraska. In the Belgian Bulge Battle this general's troops had been the FIRST to contact the besieged American garrison inside Bastogne.

Shooting tactics were not needed in the capture of Gotha,

old German city of 52,000 population, by General Roge's 4th Armored Division, on April 4. The surrender became official when Lieutenant Colonel Jerome LENTZ, of Denver, Colorado, led the FIRST troops into the city. A short distance to the north a huge underground plane factory was seized.

MUELHAUSEN MASTERPIECE

A general who mapped a combat schedule and found his instructions had been ignored saw no need for disciplinary action when he learned the upset plans resulted in the capture of Muelhausen, a sprawling Thuringian city, a day ahead of time.

The high officer was Major General Robert W. GROW, of Sibley, Iowa, commander of the 6th Armored Division.

The soldier who ran into an unexpected situation and capitalized on the advantage by taking Muelhausen without the knowledge of headquarters was Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. BROWN, of Tacoma, Washington. His combat team made the FIRST penetration of the outskirts of the city. Nineteen hundred prisoners, including 1,500 enemy wounded in a hospital, were seized.

The FIRST attack on the area was under the direction of Colonel Thomas R. BRUCE, of Mexico, Missouri, whose artillery endeavors seemed to convince the enemy a defense would be hopeless.

The reconnaissance force of Lieutenant Joseph POLICASTRO, of Perth Amboy, New Jersey, was the FIRST outfit to go in.

Captain Donald KIRCHER, of New York City, led the FIRST tanks entering the city. His real opposition came a short time earlier when his "iron horses" wiped out an enemy ambush party on the outskirts.

General Grow previously represented the 7th Army in its FIRST link-up with the 3d Army.

Launching an intensive two-week drive through central Germany, on April 4, the 89th Division of Major General

Thomas D. FINLEY, of Annapolis, Maryland, claimed the city of Eisenach (population 45,000) as its FIRST prize. Here this aggregation, whose motto was, "Get It Done," did exactly that—the hard way. It encountered die-hard SS troops, which fought the invaders desperately in the streets.

The American force was a part of General Middleton's 8th Corps.

The Thuringian campaign paid off handsomely from a monetary standpoint. Hidden German treasures were found at Merkers, near Eisenach, during mop-up operations by General Earnest's 90th Division. The FIRST big cache of Hitler's gold was unearthed by a special task force led by Lieutenant Commander Joel H. FISHER, of Brooklyn, New York. A former Treasury Department attorney, the New Yorker with the aid of infantrymen brought 100 tons of gold bullion and millions in currency and art treasures from the underground storehouse in a salt mine.

BAVARIAN BATTLEGROUND

Fanatical Nazi resistance was encountered in a series of eastward plunges inaugurated in Bavaria along the southernmost area of the roaring Western Front during the first week in April.

The FIRST important city to fall in the southern sector of the curtain-raising proceedings was Karlsruhe (population 189,000), capital of the Bavarian Baden province. The First French Army, serving under the American VI Army Group, commanded by General Jacob L. DEVERS, of York, Pennsylvania, blasted all semblance of enemy control of the lower junction point of Siegfried Line belts in taking this long-besieged industrial city.

Patch's 7th Army had bypassed Karlsruhe and obtained a fifteen-mile bridgehead on the River Main, southeast of Wuerzburg, with other elements dashing out of the Odenwald Mountain area onto the Wuerzburg-Heilbronn Plain and heading toward Nuremberg.

The FIRST key city on the River Main to be gobbled up

in these operations was Aschaffenburg, a German barracks city 25 miles southeast of Frankfurt.

In the fierce battle to subdue the enemy garrison, the 45th Division of Major General Robert T. FREDERICK, of San Francisco, California, inflicted 4,600 casualties among the stubborn foe. The city was finally cleared, following a week-long engagement, after headquarters had been forced to order the annihilation of the garrison by the infantrymen and the 1st Tactical Air Force.

FIRST honors in a great prisoner bag were carried off by a battalion led by Major Gus HEILMAN, of Charlottesville, Virginia. His men took 1,250 of the enemy during the proceedings leading up to capitulation. Heilman previously had won acclaim in Italy when a lieutenant. There his company captured a village on the Anzio beachhead.

STANDOUT SOLDIERING

Serving with General Frederick's organization in the Bavarian campaign was one of the greatest individual heroes of the war, Sergeant Llewellyn M. CHILSON, of Akron, Ohio and Berwyn, Pennsylvania.

He became the FIRST Army man to be tendered seven decorations at one time, and the presentation was made by President Truman in the White House.

Chilson's achievements were comparable to the legendary exploits of Sergeant York in World War I. Heralded as a one-man army, the Ohioan during a span of five months killed 58 Germans and helped in the capture of 243 others.

Going into action in a big way in France late in 1944, the sergeant made possible the capture of Densheim after he outflanked the enemy with the use of hand grenades and then killed three and forced nine other adversaries to surrender. For this gallantry he won the Silver Star.

In the Rhine crossing, while leading a platoon, he shot eleven Germans to death and his men captured 225, which action won him the Legion of Merit.

Perhaps Chilson's crowning achievement, earning him

the Distinguished Service Cross, occurred while the 7th Army was deep in Germany, at Meilenholen. There he drove a jeep equipped with a machine gun into a Nazi artillery nest, knocking out several guns and killing forty enemy riflemen.

Other notable and daring exploits were written in the records by this infantryman at Horsental, Neuberg, and Obernau.

TREACHEROUS TRIANGLE

The great infantry drive toward Munich and Nuremberg was not easily accomplished. This was partly due to the continued pattern of last-ditch defense by hostile forces in the large centers of population.

One of these points of prolonged resistance was Wuerzburg (population 108,000), capital of Lower Franconia. There were four days of street fighting by the 45th Division of Major General Harry J. COLLINS, of Chicago, Illinois, before the Rainbow outfit conquered its FIRST large city on its way from the Rhine to Austria.

The going for the 7th Army was also extremely tough in one area of 150 square miles because of the presence of 6,500 enemy troops bolstered by the 17th SS (Elite) Panzer Division. This hostile force was contained in a triangle of bitter resistance whose three sides extended between Heilbronn, Crailsheim, and Bad Mergentheim.

The latter, a resort city, was a comparatively easy prey to the 4th Infantry Division of Major General Harold W. BLAKELEY, of Washington, D. C. and Malden, Massachusetts, whose outfit sent the FIRST regiment to land on the beaches in the D-day invasion of France.

The FIRST soldier going into town was a battalion medical commander, Captain Richard HERRICK, of Webster City, Iowa. He brought about the release of three wounded Americans in a hospital there without contest, and pulled out before a task force came in for the formal seizure and occupation.

Heilbronn, a communications center of 73,000 population, was a different story. Germans resisted for ten days, mostly in street fighting, before surrender was made to the 100th Division of Major General Withers A. BURRESS, of Richmond, Virginia. This same unit in the previous month became the FIRST division ever to capture the French fortress of Bitche.

On the southeast vertex of the triangle was Crailsheim, where the 10th Armored Division of Major General William H. MORRIS, Jr., of Washington, D. C., took a stand.

In the drive to this city the "Tiger" Division more than clawed the Panzer troops. It roared ahead in a 35-mile breakthrough in the FIRST head-on crash with the enemy in the triangular area, capturing fourteen towns and gathering 3,000 prisoners. The pace was so fast that the Germans fled after token resistance in the outskirts of Crailsheim.

The FIRST task force to batter into the city was a battalion led by Major Curtis Q. HANKINS, of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. His outfit previously had captured Kastel.

Crailsheim became known as "Bastogne No. 2," because of enemy persistence in guarding the American supply route from Bad Mergentheim, and the terrific counterattacks on Morris' forces, as well as the fierce attacks from the air by the Luftwaffe.

Captain George SIGNIUS, of Kingstree, South Carolina, commanded the FIRST supply trucks to reach Crailsheim. Ten miles away from the latter city a tank force led by Lieutenant Colonel John Raymond RILEY, of Danville, Virginia, captured Croffelbach and destroyed a German supply train. Previously, he had taken the FIRST tanks into Trier.

Four days after entering the city, the 10th Armored was forced out by the hard-hitting enemy. A wider corridor was cut, however, with the assistance of the 63d (Blood and Fire) Infantry of Major General Louis E. HIBBS, of Washington, D. C., the FIRST contemporary division to relieve Morris by driving through the Hardthausen Woods to slice the Panzer defenders in two.

Recapture of Crailsheim cleared the way for drives to Nuremberg and Munich.

POCKET PRECAUTIONS

The new 15th Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Leonard T. GEROW, of St. Paul, Minnesota, and a native of Petersburg, Virginia, took its FIRST stand with Bradley's Central Group on March 30.

With the Ruhr encircled, Gerow's troops were stationed on the western side of the great basin pocket, in a relief capacity, offering large elements of the 1st and 9th Armies the opportunity of pulling stakes and plunging eastward beyond the surrounded area.

In the meantime more than 100,000 of the trapped enemy were frustrated in an attempt to break away from their besiegers.

On the south side of the pocket the 9th Division of Major General Louis A. CRAIG, of Raleigh, North Carolina and West Point, New York, threw back a big force of would-be escapees in the FIRST dramatic action of this kind by the 1st Army, in early April. The fighting was around Winterberg, which city was captured by Craig's outfit.

Other action at the same time involved the 8th Infantry of Major General Bryant E. MOORE, of Ellsworth, Maine. This Golden Arrow Division crossed the Sieg River and captured Siegen. General Moore fought against both the Nazis and the Japs. He led the FIRST Army troops into action against the Nipponese on Guadalcanal Island.

While spearheaders of the 1st Army fought past the Ruhr Basin in a new offensive, starting April 6, the 78th (Lightning) Division of Major General Edwin P. PARKER, Jr., of Wytheville, Virginia, took a chunk out of the pocket in battles north of Schladern, and in five days corralled 47,581 German prisoners.

Along the whole Western Front, in the first week in April, the Allies captured 189,000 of the enemy.

The 78th saw its FIRST action near Roetgen, in December, 1944.

PIED-PIPER PROCEEDINGS

The little city of Hameln, given story-book prominence as the home of the Pied Piper in the year 1284, when he was credited with driving the rats away, fell to the 30th Division of General Hobbs on April 8.

Another legendary figure, but of modern vintage, was the FIRST American officer to barge into the city hall. He was Colonel Walter M. JOHNSON, of Missoula and Butte, Montana, whose regiment captured the historic place after three hours of heavy fighting. In the end 1,000 enemy troops were made prisoners.

The house of the Pied Piper was undamaged, although one-fifth of Hameln was in ruins, mostly as a result of U. S. artillery shelling during the night.

Twenty-five miles northeast of this Weser River city, and one day after its capitulation, the "Hatchet Men" of the 84th (Railsplitters) Division of Major General Alexander R. BOLLING, Sr., of Washington, D. C., and a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, began an attack on Hannover, 12th largest city in Germany, with a population of 472,000.

It was here that the general was given the FIRST news of the liberation of his son, a lieutenant made a prisoner in Alsace in the previous month, from an enemy camp.

The FIRST tank battalion to bombard Hannover was led by Lieutenant Colonel John A. (Tiger) BEALL, of Jacksonville, Texas.

Private Walter REGISUS, of Chicago, Illinois, was the FIRST doughboy to arrive in the city. Speedy occupation followed. Seven hundred Panzer grenadiers and marines sent from Hamburg and Bremen were captured after futile resistance on the previous day. Two bridges over the Leine River were seized before the 84th went in.

POCKET PENETRATIONS

A merciless drive to squeeze out entrapped Germans in the northern Ruhr began on April 7. One narrator observed that the eastern roof of the great pocket was smashed in by a thirteen-mile drive of the 8th Armored Division of Major General John M. DEVINE, of Highland Falls and West Point, New York. In accomplishing this, the "Iron Snake" outfit captured Soest and drove the enemy from the north bank of the Ruhr River.

The 8th had previously been the FIRST tank aggregation to cross the Wessel bridge area of the Rhine.

Another notable pocket penetration, requiring three days, involved the seizure of the largest city in the basin—Essen, population 660,000. Stiff opposition was encountered in the area by the 17th Airborne Division of General Miley and the 79th Infantry of General Wyche.

The FIRST fighters to enter the city on the 10th were led by Colonel Edson D. RAFF, of New York City. His paratroopers had won acclaim for great exploits in Africa, and a week before storming into Essen the same regiment delivered the deciding blow in the wresting of Muenster.

Other industrial centers yielding to the thrusts of Simpson's Army were: Dortmund (537,000), Gelsenkirchen (313,000), Hildesheim (62,000).

Bochum (303,000) was captured by General Wyche; Halberstadt (site of a huge Messerschmitt plane factory), by General Macon; and Brunswick (201,000), by General Hobbs.

Twenty-three towns were seized in a thirty-mile drive, consuming a week, by the 35th (Santa Fe) Division of Major General Paul W. BAADE, of Ft. Wayne, Indiana. These included Recklinghausen (87,000), a munitions center. The same outfit took Herne during the roof-caving operations of April 7-11.

Four months earlier the 35th had fired its FIRST shot into Germany, and on the following day, December 6, captured Saarguemines.

FADING FUEHRER

Patton's lunge toward Czechoslovakia gained momentum on April 10, when three armored and nine infantry divisions began a series of new attacks.

The immediate objective was to cut off the retreat of the enemy into the Bavarian Mountains. Hitler now also faced the threat of having his country sliced into two halves by the invading army.

Erfurt (150,000), for more than twelve centuries the principal center of German culture, was one of the first prizes seized by the 3d Army in the new area of fighting. This city of famous gardens, and once the home of Martin Luther, fell to the 80th Division of General McBride.

The FIRST troops to enter Erfurt were led by Lieutenant Colonel John P. WOODS, of Louisville, Kentucky. Dough-boys captured more than 600 of the foe during five hours of fighting. Captain William H. CHAMBERLAIN, of San Francisco, California, took the FIRST company into the so-called "Little Venice."

FIRST troops to reach the airport were commanded by Captain Howard CLARK, of Nutley, New Jersey. In the assault eighteen planes were knocked out and twenty-three Nazi tanks destroyed.

The 80th drove on to capture Weimar, birthplace of the 1919 German Republic, the next day, accepting surrender by bicycle courier. Not a shot was fired when the infantrymen entered. Captain Lawrence A. DEGNER, of New York City, military government officer, went in ahead of the FIRST troops of occupation.

Three miles away the Americans seized the infamous Buchenwald prison camp. More than 20,000 political prisoners were found.

On the following two days, the McBride outfit captured Jena, where there was resistance, and Gera (82,000).

Reaching within thirty miles of the Czech border in a 32-mile dash, the 4th Armored Division of Major General

William M. HOGE, Sr., of Boonville, Missouri, and a native of Lexington in the same state, crossed the Mulde River east of Jena. Another scarcely unopposed plunge was made to the same stream by the 6th Armored Division. Hoge had previously directed the FIRST crossing of the Rhine at Remagen.

General Grow's 6th Armored breakthrough was referred to as a "flanking of Berlin."

A third armored division making great inroads at this time in Thuringia was the 11th, commanded by Major General Holmes E. (High Explosive) DAGER, of Union and Asbury Park, New Jersey. His tankmen captured Rodach, Coburg, and Neustadt in a period of three days, and on the 15th hauled down the Nazi flag at Bayreuth, the FIRST large community to be wrested in the American drive into the mountain fortress of Bavaria.

The SS troops gave up the Wagnerian shrine city of 37,000 population after firing a few shots when nine hours of siege were terminated.

The four-day breakthrough of the 3d Army severed the last good road between north and south Germany.

SHATTERED SCHWEINFURT

Seldom making advances by leaps and bounds, because of fanatical resistance in its path, the 7th Army of General Patch found the Germans still tough but more yielding than usual when the Americans charged for the attack on Schweinfurt, on April 10. The battle here was a three-day affair.

Pincers were clamped on the Main River manufacturing city of 41,000 population in crushing blows by the 12th Armored (Hellcat) Division of Major General Roderick ALLEN, of Marshall, Texas, and the 14th Armored of Major General Albert C. SMITH, of Warrenton, Virginia and West Point, New York. The latter saw its FIRST war action in the drive through the Vosges Mountains in France. Allen's out-

fit had been the FIRST division of the 7th to find an opening through the Odenwald Forest east of the Main River at the beginning of the current stepped-up offensive.

Artillery went to work on Schweinfurt, and Allied blows from the air completed the preliminaries in the face of the refusal of the garrison to surrender. The city was already in rubble as a result of ten air raids between August, 1943, and October, 1944. The FIRST American raid on Schweinfurt was led by Major General (then Brigadier General) Robert B. WILLIAMS, of Albany, Texas. He manned the nose gun of his Fortress when Nazi fighter planes attacked. Commander of the bombardment division of the 8th Air Force, his raiders had gained renown by destroying a plane factory at Oschersleben early in 1944. The enemy lost 210 Focke-Wulf aircraft while the Americans suffered 42 bombers shot down.

The troops of Major General Harry J. Collins, of the 42d Infantry Division, marched for two miles before plunging into Schweinfurt at daybreak on the 11th. The FIRST regiment to enter was led by Colonel Norman C. CAUM, of Great Falls, Montana. Captain Robert DUFFY, of Orange, New Jersey, commanded the FIRST company to strike at the resisting forces. Spirited fighting lasted all day, and enemy sniping was a hindrance to earlier capture of the city. At least 2,000 Nazi soldiers were taken in custody before nightfall. The great ball-bearing plants there had been reduced to ruins.

FIVE FIGHTING FORCES

A five-day battle to overcome Nuremberg turned out to be a sort of five-ring circus. Five divisions of the 7th Army collaborated to bring the great Nazi "rally city" under the domination of conquering Americans.

Seizure of this second largest community of Bavaria (population 431,000) represented the No. 1 achievement of Lieutenant General Alexander M. PATCH, of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and a native of Ft. Huachuca, Arizona, in the

great campaign cutting the enemy to shreds on the southern flank of the Western Front.

For the FIRST time the "beer-garden gangsters" were given a beating in their own bailiwick—the "dream city" and the site of the annual party congress.

The conquering forces were led by General Frederick of the 45th Division. Teaming up in the operation were the 12th and 14th Armored and the 42d and 3d Infantry Divisions. The latter, under the direction of Major General John W. (Iron Mike) O'DANIEL, of Newark, Delaware and Atlanta, Georgia, joined with Frederick in the FIRST bridgehead stand in taking control of the Regnitz River in the heart of the city.

After fanatical resistance by the defenders of Hitler's shrine city, Nuremberg fell to the invaders on the Fuehrer's "blackest birthday," April 20.

ELBE EPITOME

April 11 was a red letter day for Simpson's 9th Army.

The same applies to the 19th Army Corps commanded by Lieutenant General Raymond S. McLAIN, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and a native of Washington County, Kentucky. The occasion was the arrival of tanks and infantry on the west bank of the Elbe River, the last water barrier in the direction of Berlin. This FIRST incursion on the picturesque stream occurred far to the east of the Ruhr pocket, where other divisions under McLain were helping to put the pressure on the entrapped enemy.

A plunge of fifty miles in twelve hours won the new bridgehead, the FIRST division across being the 2d Armored, commanded by Major General Isaac D. WHITE, of Des Moines, Iowa and Petersboro, New Hampshire. The operation occurred after a distance record was set for the 9th Army, advancing 240 miles over a period of nineteen days.

The FIRST outfit to establish a permanent bridgehead on

the east bank of the Elbe was the 83d Infantry Division of Major General Robert C. MACON, of Washington, D. C. These "Thunderbolt" fighters set up their rallying point at Barby, fifteen miles south of Magdeburg, where White's tanks gained a foothold. However, this bridgehead was wrested from the 2d Armored on the 16th in a severe counterattack, and the Nazis were not thoroughly ejected until the real fighting for Magdeburg began.

LEIPZIG LIQUIDATION

Two major fronts were maintained by the 1st Army in the mid-April struggle extending from the Ruhr pocket to the Elbe River. The latter phase, on the easternmost line of fighting, involved a drive to capture three key cities—Halle, Dessau, and Leipzig. Occupation of these strongholds was designed to clinch the final and complete subjugation of the great Ruhr Valley, and also looked ahead to a stand against Berlin. The operation was an extension of the Weser River campaign.

The FIRST of the three big industrial centers to fall to the divisions of General Courtney H. HODGES, of Perry, Georgia, was Halle (population 220,000).

The greatest prize was Leipzig. The battle opened on the 13th.

One day later, Wissenfels, sixteen miles southwest of the former city, was captured by the 69th Division of Major General Emil F. REINHARDT, of Detroit, Michigan, and a native of Bay City in the same state. This outfit also shared with the 9th Armored Division of Leonard the job of subduing Leipzig, the FIRST large German city under siege that still held its prewar population together with refugees, which swelled its normal number of inhabitants from 700,000 to 1,000,000.

The fifth largest city of the Reich was a tough nut to crack, particularly because it had been blueprinted as an outward defense bastion against attack on Berlin. It contained a large concentration of anti-aircraft guns capable of

being switched to ground defense, which proved a great handicap to the American invaders.

The eastern suburbs of this imposing military depot and communications center were reached on the 17th. The squeeze on 40,000 Nazis defending the city was clamped after a fifteen-hour battle.

Captain Edward L. CALLAHAN, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, commanded the FIRST company going in. This officer also led the FIRST troops to reach the Elster River which courses through the heart of the metropolitan center.

The FIRST officer detailed in the acceptance of the enemy surrender of the Hitler fortress and art, medical, and publishing center, was Colonel Walter D. BUIE, of Asheville, North Carolina.

Three-fourths of Leipzig had been ruined, mostly by raids from the air. American participation in the procedure of destruction included a battle in the sky over this FIRST city in Saxony on August 17, 1944, during which a Mustang fighter skipper became the FIRST U. S. airman to be fired on by a Nazi rocket (Jetty) plane. He was Lieutenant Jimmy C. SHOFFIT, of Ft. Worth, Texas. Another hero in the same aerial encounter was Lieutenant Cyril W. JONES, Jr. of Athens, Tennessee. This pilot and wingman for his squadron commander shot down the FIRST ME-163 rocket aircraft to be destroyed in close quarters.

RUHR ROUT

Combat in the last week of the Ruhr battle rolled into high gear with the capture by the 9th Army of Duisburg (population 431,000), on the 13th. Divisions belonging to the great fighting aggregation of Lieutenant General William H. (Texas Bill) SIMPSON, of Weatherford, Texas, had besieged this metropolitan center on the east bank of the Rhine for six weeks. The enemy garrison had repeatedly refused to surrender.

After the capitulation, the 9th, which had been the FIRST army to reach the Rhine in the northern sector, ad-

vanced to a junction with the 1st Army at Weter on the Ruhr River, eight miles south of Dortmund.

The outfits responsible for this vital operation were the 8th Division of General Moore and the 79th, commanded by General Wyche.

The pocket on the south was cleaned up by the 97th Division of Brigadier General Milton B. HALSEY, of Huntsville, Alabama. This was after it had participated in the FIRST combat action of the new 15th Army.

The big payoff came on the 19th in the fall of Düsseldorf, the last of the great Ruhr industrial cities to be wrested from the enemy. The 17th Airborne of General Miley was the conquering division here. The books were closed on the long basin conflict with the capture on the same day of Remscheid and Solingen.

More than 300,000 enemy soldiers were taken during the campaign.

In the meantime other elements of the 9th Army clinched their hold on the northern Elbe River bridgehead by capturing Magdeburg, the 12th largest city in Germany, with a population of 335,000. The conquerors were the 2d Armored Division of General White and the 30th Division, commanded by Major General Leland S. HOBBS, of Rutledge, Pennsylvania, and a native of Gloucester, Massachusetts. The latter was the FIRST outfit to mop up a large Reich city on the banks of the Elbe.

Under siege for eight days, Magdeburg fell on the 18th. The FIRST tank assault on the city was led by Brigadier General John H. COLLIER, of Dallas, Texas.

Colonel Russel BAKER, of Leavenworth, Kansas, took the FIRST infantrymen inside for the street fighting.

CHAPTER 14

FIRST EASTERN PLUNGE OUT OF REICH

The desperation and defiance of Hitler in the face of overwhelming odds was brought to a focus on the southern flank of fighting in mid-April.

The enemy had no means of organized resistance in the north directly west of Berlin and knew it. There the Allied troops were marking time until a junction could be made with the Russians coming from the east in the inevitable squeeze on the German capital.

In southern Germany, however, there was roaring action. Drives were on to sweep into Czechoslovakia and Austria. Tough nuts yet to be cracked before the Nazis would collapse were the southernmost hinge of the front at Munich and the heavily defended mountain stronghold where Hitler awaited a struggle to the death.

Much of the time, the charge of Patton's 3d Army was an unopposed romp, with tanks not needed for attack. The large city of Chemnitz, however, was stubbornly defended for many days.

In a fast advance the great river-jumping 76th Division of Major General William R. SCHMIDT, of Verdigre, Nebraska, quickly laid hands on Zweitz, twenty miles southwest of Leipzig, on the 14th. The division had previously won acclaim in a sensational plunge into the Siegfried Line at Echternach in February in its FIRST combat of the war.

Plauen, important rail center, was seized in the drive through Saxony.

Rothenburg, a town 1,000 years old, fell to General Blakeley's 4th Division.

Lieutenant John C. POCHINCHUK, of Hinsdale, Mas-

sachusetts, was the FIRST soldier to go behind the German lines when he led a group into this Protestant stronghold to deliver a surrender ultimatum. The FIRST battalion inside when capitulation was accomplished was commanded by Major Frank BURK, of Chester, Pennsylvania.

On the 17th, the 89th Infantry Division achieved its last great capture of the war by grabbing Zwickau. The FIRST prize acquired at the expense of SS troops by this unit headed by Major General Thomas D. FINLEY, born at Annapolis, Maryland, had been Eisenach, Germany.

Another important seizure near the border of Czechoslovakia was Langfeld, with General Culin of the 87th Division in charge.

CZECHOSLOVAKIAN CHARGE

The grand finale in the surge to "cut Germany in half" was supplied when the 90th Division captured Hof on the 16th and immediately drove on to cross the border into the Sudetenland.

This FIRST arrival of American troops in Czechoslovakia was achieved by the 90th, commanded by Major General Herbert L. EARNEST, of White Stone, Virginia, and a native of Richmond in the same state.

The FIRST battalion into Hof was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Charles B. BRYAN, of Johns Island, South Carolina.

An eight-mile advance followed into Czechoslovakia. The FIRST American to cross the border was Lieutenant Merrill RUDES, of Clay Center, Ohio, with the invasion occurring on the 18th. Leading the FIRST regiment to figure in the invasion was Colonel Jacob W. BELKE, of Boonville, Missouri. The incursion occurred northwest of Asch, in the northwest tip of the country. The only resistance was at Prex.

Asch was the FIRST city to fall in Czechoslovakia, and the conqueror was Colonel Charles H. REED, of Richmond,

Virginia. This town of 28,000 had been the scene of the infamous deal by Czech traitors to dismember the Czech republic.

AUSTRIAN ARRIVAL

The southern prongs of Patton's 3d Army were at this time driving close to Austria and spreading a dragnet north of Munich in approaching Patch's 7th Army rampagers, which were on the extreme southern front. The Russians were also advancing west toward Bohemia.

Austria was invaded on the 26th, and the liquidation of the enemy line along the Danube River became a twin operation northeast of the Austrian border.

The 86th (Blackhawk) Division of Major General Harris O. MELASKY, of Los Angeles, California, and a native of Austin, Texas, was the FIRST outfit of the 3d Army to cross the Danube.

The FIRST towns captured by Patton in this Danube campaign were Ingostadt, seized by the 87th Division of Major General Frank L. CULIN, Jr., of Tucson, Arizona, and a native of Seattle, Washington; and Regensburg, which fell to the 65th (Battle-Axe) Division, commanded by Major General Stanley E. REINHART, of Polk, Ohio.

Not a shot was fired when a contingent of General Dager's 11th Armored Division walked into Austria. The FIRST American officer to cross the border was Lieutenant Colonel John T. WINGARD, of Lexington, South Carolina, leader of a task force.

The seventh nation in Europe to be trodden by Allied soldiers was entered 21 miles northeast of Passau, at the village of Lackenharser.

FLYERS FREED

The FIRST large-scale liberation of Allied prisoners by the 3d Army was accomplished in and around Moosburg,

Germany, on the 28th, by the 14th Armored Division of Major General Albert C. SMITH, of Warrenton, Virginia and West Point, New York.

A total of 130,000 captive soldiers were set free, including 50,000 Americans. Most of the men turned loose were flyers. One of these was Lieutenant Colonel William A. HATCHER, Jr., of Detroit, Michigan and Spokane, Washington. He was the FIRST group commander of the 8th Air Force to be lost in action, having bailed out on his 13th mission over Europe and immediately made a prisoner of the Nazis.

Another noted airman set free was Lieutenant Colonel Francis S. (Gabby) GABRESKI, of Oil City, Pennsylvania. A Thunderbolt ace, this pilot was top scorer of Europe in air victories, having shot down 28 Nazi planes and, in addition, destroyed three on the ground. Gabreski, before joining the AAF, had been the FIRST American officer to fly with the Polish Air Force in Britain, having fought in defense of Warsaw in 1939. He was captured when forced to land his craft near Koblenz, in July, 1944.

The FIRST serviceman to wear insignia for having been in a Nazi prison camp was a bomber navigator, Captain Robert H. BISHOP, of Knoxville, Tennessee. He was shot down in 1943, and while a captive was responsible for the execution of a design with a Donald Duck character by Walt Disney.

Brigadier General Arthur W. VANAMAN, of Milville, New Jersey, was the FIRST American general to become a prisoner in the Reich. He was made a captive when reported missing in action while acting as an observer on a raid over Germany. The Swiss intervened in his behalf and obtained his release from a camp, as a result of his handling of a group of repatriated prisoners in an extended march during which the general did not lose a man.

TRIUMPHANT THUNDERBOLTS

The great deeds of U. S. airmen in Europe only served to reflect the ability and resourcefulness of the high officers in charge of the operations. The top man in the latter category was General of the Army Henry H. (Hap) ARNOLD, of Gladwyne, Pennsylvania and Sonoma, California, who near the end of the war claimed the AAF destroyed more than 50,000 enemy planes.

Four years after the conclusion of hostilities in Europe, Arnold became the FIRST permanent General of the Air Force. In 1912, when a lieutenant at Ft. Riley, Kansas, he was the FIRST man ever to send a wireless message from an airplane.

Many airmen flew to greatness while piloting Thunderbolt fighter planes. Aces in their ranks were almost commonplace.

Major General Frank O. (Monk) HUNTER, of New York City, was the FIRST U. S. air commander to put the Thunderbolt in action. He became chief of the 8th Air Force Fighter Command. During World War I, the New Yorker had shot down eight German planes.

A standout among the Thunderbolt aces was Major Don S. GENTILE, of Piqua, Ohio. At the height of his war career he became the FIRST pilot to destroy thirty enemy aircraft, seven on the ground and twenty-three in air fighting. He was also the FIRST airman to destroy more planes than were bagged by Captain Rickenbacker (27) in World War I.

Almost on a par with the Ohioan was Colonel Hubert C. ZEMKE, of Missoula, Montana. His final score was 28, including 8½ on the ground. Zemke turned up missing on an escort mission to Hamburg, Germany, and became a war prisoner, being liberated by the Russians.

The Montanan had demonstrated his versatility when the fighter-plane group he commanded became the FIRST 8th Air Force outfit to bag 100 German craft.

BANNER BUZZ BOYS

Among the many aces who became war casualties was Colonel Glenn E. DUNCAN, of Houston, Texas. His total was 24½. The "Buzz Boys," a unit he commanded, made the FIRST U. S. dive-bombing attack on Reich targets on the continent. The Texan set a record for distance by Thunderbolt planes when he led a flight to Berlin.

The FIRST American pilot to bag twenty Nazi planes was Major (then Captain) Walker M. MAHURIN, of Ft. Wayne, Indiana. A member of Colonel Zemke's "Wolf Pack" group, he turned up missing after a raid over France but reached England safely. Going from there to the Pacific, Mahurin shot down his 22d enemy plane, a Jap bomber, over Luzon.

Lieutenant Colonel James C. STEWART, of Coronada, California, commanded the FIRST Thunderbolt squadron to pass the century mark in German planes destroyed. He became an ace the same day, over Germany, and later ran his personal score up to twelve.

The FIRST enemy plane to be bagged by the 56th Thunderbolt Group was a tribute to the shooting artistry of Captain Walter V. COOK, of Cincinnati, Ohio. The unit later ran up its score to more than 800. Captain Cook personally destroyed eleven of that number.

Lieutenant Colonel (then Lieutenant) William P. (Benny) BENEDICT, of Pasadena and San Quentin, California, was the FIRST American fighter pilot to shoot down a Nazi plane over Yugoslavia. Four of his seven air victories were attained while flying for the RAF. Four of his own planes were shot from under him. The Californian once led a formation which sank an Axis ship. Still a great competitor in postwar service, Benedict, while piloting an Air Force C-47, became the FIRST airman to bring down a plane at the North Pole, May 3, 1952.

The FIRST Thunderbolt plane to bag four German aircraft in a single day was piloted by Lieutenant Quincy L. BROWN, Jr., of Bristow, Oklahoma.

Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert O. WYMOND, of Louisville, Kentucky and Detroit, Michigan, commander of the "Fighting Cooks" Squadron, was the FIRST flyer to load Thunderbolts with 1000-pound bombs.

A raid on Saarbruecken, in October, 1944, marked the FIRST time blind bombing by a fighter-bomber was accomplished by using ground controllers as navigators. The pilot was Lieutenant Arthur P. WILDERN, of Cleveland, Ohio. The guiding was through a radio setup.

Major John L. BECK, of Post Falls, Idaho, led eight Thunderbolts in the FIRST attack on Hitler's fortress city of Berchtesgaden, eleven weeks before its capture during the last week of European combat.

FORTRESS "FIRSTS"

Most of the headlines devoted to the earliest American bomber raids of Europe concerned the exploits of the B-17 Flying Fortresses.

These predecessors of the larger "battleships of the air" went into action against Nazidom on November 17, 1942. Colonel James H. WALLACE, of Washington, D. C. and Los Angeles, California, commanded the FIRST Fortress group to go on a mission from England. The colonel flew on 78 raids to Germany, France, Belgium, Norway, and the Netherlands.

"Hell's Angels," the FIRST bomber group in Europe to complete 25 missions, was skippered by Colonel Kermit D. STEVENS, of Eugene, Oregon, when its 200th mission was completed in July, 1943.

Sergeant Michael ROSKOVICH, of Fayette City, Pennsylvania, was the FIRST American to negotiate 25 missions in a B-17 over Nazi Europe.

The "Knockout Dropper" was a sort of legend in the early operations. It was piloted by Lieutenant John SAVAGE, of Coffeyville, Kansas, when it became the FIRST U. S. heavy bomber to complete 75 missions over Europe. This noted

Fortress was also the FIRST to negotiate fifty missions with no crewman suffering a wound in action.

The FIRST Fortress crew in Europe to complete its missions as a unit was piloted by Lieutenant Irving H. (Red) FRANK, of Roxbury, Massachusetts. The B-17 was known as the "Raunchy Wolf," and participated in the allotted 25 raids in four months. No crewman was ever injured, although in a flight against Muenster, Germany, the plane was badly crippled.

SUPREME SACRIFICE

More than 100,000 American airmen were listed as casualties during the war. United States casualties in all branches of the services exceeded 1,000,000.

In the 337 days of fighting in Europe following D-day, 90,000 Americans made the supreme sacrifice. Of these Lieutenant Jack MATHIS, of San Angelo, Texas, was the FIRST to be awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

A lead bombardier on a B-17, his right side was pierced by flak and one of his arms was almost torn off. Nevertheless, the Texan crawled back to his bombsight and released a bomb load on a Nazi submarine yard near Bremen before dying. His marksmanship served as the directive for almost twenty other bombardiers on the mission in other aircraft.

Brigadier General Nathan B. FORREST, of Memphis, Tennessee, was the FIRST American of his rank to become a combat casualty in Europe. He was reported missing in action after his plane was shot down during an air battle over Kiel, Germany. This officer was a great grandson of the noted Confederate leader, whose motto was, "Git there fustest with the mostest men."

Another of these numerous missing-in-action tragedies befell Captain Joseph W. CARTER, of Lawton, Oklahoma, hero of the FIRST all-American bombing attack on Wilhelmshaven and Emden, Germany. Pilot of the Fortress "Carter and His Little Pills," he participated in ten other

successful missions but failed to return to his base after bombing Rennes and Rouen, France.

The narrowest escape of any crewman in the FIRST American encounter with a new type of enemy antiaircraft bomb was experienced by Lieutenant D. G. BARNES, of El Paso, Texas. These explosives were towed on wires behind planes during a raid on Kiel, Germany, January 5, 1944.

BERLIN BOMBINGS

The curtain was raised for American aerial assaults on Berlin on March 3, 1944, when the FIRST mission over the city was completed by Lightning fighter planes. It was a test flight, and the group leader was Lieutenant Colonel Jack S. JENKINS, of Levelland, Texas.

Nineteen aircraft were lost in the non-stop 1,200-mile round trip from Britain and return.

The FIRST U. S. raid on Berlin came the next day. Lieutenant Colonel Harry G. MUMFORD, of San Jose, California, and a native of El Paso, Texas, was the pilot of the lead plane. The FIRST group of Flying Fortresses to release bombs on the German capital was led by Colonel Chester P. GILGER, of Darrouzett, Texas.

Lieutenant Marshall PHIXTON, of Mexia, Texas, a bombardier, was the FIRST American to drop a bomb on the city in any raid conducted exclusively by the AAF.

A predecessor, Major Sidney S. BARTLETT, of Bel-Air, California, was credited with being the FIRST U. S. bombardier to attack Berlin. This was during a raid conducted by the RAF. Bartlett released a blockbuster from a Lancaster plane while an observer, on March 27, 1943.

Americans appeared a third time over Berlin two days after the FIRST attack by bombers. It was described as a "crushing raid." There were 800 Fortresses from U. S. bases in Britain, accompanied by the same number of fighter planes.

The leading bomber group was led by Lieutenant Colonel Claud E. PUTNAM, of Jacksboro, Texas.

The FIRST all-American raid on Germany proper was made on January 27, 1943. Lieutenant Reinaldo SAIZ, of Segundo, California, was the FIRST U. S. bombardier to release a bomb on Hitler's own country. The FIRST plane over Germany in that assault was piloted by Lieutenant Edward J. HENNESSY, of Chicago, Illinois.

TRENTON TWINS

The FIRST team of brothers in the same crew in European operations encountered stark tragedy during a raid on Germany in November, 1943. They were Lieutenant Ashbrook E. TYSON and his brother Edwin, a sergeant and gunner, both of Trenton, New Jersey. Pilot of the Fortress "All Shot to Hell," the lieutenant continued over the target even while one engine was afire and flames were pouring from one of the wings. The crew bailed out, and the brothers were listed as missing in action.

A marked flair for versatility in aerial gunnery was displayed by Sergeant Eugene S. BUDZDANOWSKI, of Chicago, Illinois, in a raid on Muenster, Germany. He became the FIRST bomber crewman over Europe to bag three different types of enemy fighter craft in a single engagement—a JU-88, an ME-210, and an FW-190.

The insistence of another tail gunner to do more than his share was responsible for the designation "Smiling Sandy Sanchez," which appeared in bold letters on one B-17. It was the FIRST time in the annals of the 8th Air Force that a plane was named after one of its heroic crewmen. Sergeant Sator S. (Smiling Sandy) SANCHEZ, of Lockport, Illinois, was accused of "trying to win the war all by himself" when he refused to give up combat after his tour of duty ended, flying on until he had amassed 44 missions. Sandy's best marksmanship was displayed during a raid on Muenster, when he shot down two enemy planes during a single attack.

Captain Irl E. (Baldy) BALDWIN, of Yakima, Washing-

ton, was the FIRST pilot in the European theater to complete his quota of raids. He never brought back a wounded crewman on any of his missions. Baldwin's ground-crew unit, led by Sergeant Fabian S. FOLMER, of Mansfield, Ohio, was the FIRST to return to America with a plane which had completed its allotted missions. This B-17 was known as "Hell's Angels."

A general known popularly as "Wild Indian" lived up to his name after being appointed chief of the 8th Air Force Bomber Command. He was Major General Frederick L. ANDERSON, Jr., of Washington, D. C., and a native of Kingston, New York. While a wing commander, he personally participated in the greatest air battle involving heavy bombers ever fought by the 8th. American airmen downed close to 100 Jerry planes and drove away 200 enemy fighters during a gigantic raid on Kiel, on June 13, 1943.

General Anderson organized the FIRST U. S. bombardier instructor school.

MERCY MISSIONS

An officer whose men inflicted terrific punishment on Hitler's sky forces won one of his most prized decorations as a result of noncombat missions of mercy.

Colonel Karl TRUESDELL, of Washington, D. C., received Poland's highest military medal after he commanded an aerial task force in the FIRST reported American expedition to drop arms, food, ammunition, and medicine to patriots of that country fighting inside Warsaw.

Truesdell's outfit negotiated the FIRST two missions of Fortresses in dropping supplies and guns to the Maquis in France.

On the combat side of the ledger, this officer's group destroyed 446 hostile aircraft.

Every raid brought new experiences to heroic airmen. For example, when Lieutenant R. Walker MULLINS, of Covington, Tennessee, left his base on a mission in his "Rambling Rebel" Fortress, he didn't dream he would be

destined to encounter a "Jettie," a German rocket fighter plane. In fact, he had not known such a thing existed. But there it was, and the pilot's crew fought the FIRST battle with this type of aircraft.

Something new tried out by another pilot was at the expense of the enemy. In this case, Lieutenant Robert T. KROUT, of Stockton, California, was the FIRST American to shoot down a Nazi plane by firing a nose gun by remote control. The contraption was his own idea and proved a godsend to his crew when German fighters attacked his B-17.

The FIRST airman to shoot down a Nazi fighter plane with the new chin turret gun was Lieutenant T. B. NELSON, of Port Tampa City, Florida, a bombardier.

A navigator is supposed to keep his eyes on his instruments. In one notable case, however, Lieutenant Allen A. RIIPA, of Fairport Harbor, Ohio, an officer of this classification, saw something else much more important. He was the FIRST to spot the target through extremely heavy clouds in a B-17 raid on Oschersleben, Germany, and as a result a Focke-Wulf plane factory was all but obliterated.

MUSTANG MAULERS

The P-51 Mustang was known as "the fastest fighter plane." When a revised version made its appearance, late in 1943, the chore of leading the FIRST flights into action fell to Lieutenant Colonel George R. BICKELL, of Nutley and Belleville, New Jersey. As commander of a 9th Air Force Mustang group, he built up a record of destruction. In ten months his pilots shot down 471 enemy planes.

Colonel Donald J. M. BLAKESLEE, of Fairport Harbor, Ohio, was another outstanding group commander of Mustangs. He personally ran up a score of 21 Nazi planes destroyed, 15 of them in the air. He also established an European record of 1,300 hours of combat.

Blakeslee's group became the FIRST fighter outfit to run its score up to 500 enemy planes destroyed.

Lieutenant Charles F. GUMM, Jr., of Spokane, Wash-

ington, was the FIRST pilot of a Mustang P-51B to shoot down a German plane, the victory occurring over Bremen. This heroic airman gave up his life to save a village. Encountering flight difficulties, the officer had the alternative of plunging into townspeople at Nayland, England, or risking a fatal crash outside the town. He chose death.

Another ace, Major Howard (Deacon) HIVELY, of Athens, Ohio, commanded the FIRST 8th Air Force squadron to destroy 300 German planes. His personal score was fourteen, including eleven victories in the air.

Lieutenant Roscoe C. BROWN, of New York City, pilot of a Mustang, was the FIRST Negro airman to battle and destroy a German jet plane. The engagement occurred over Berlin, on March 24, 1945.

TRAVELING TED

"Ted and His Traveling Circus" did a lot of visiting after flying three squadrons from America to England, in September, 1942. The first strike of the B-24 Liberators was made at Lille, France; then the outfit hit U-boat pens at Biscay; moved to a new base at Oran, North Africa; raided Bizerte; moved base of operations to Tobruk, and went on to raid Sicily and Italy.

The barnstorming airmen made the FIRST attack on Greater Germany ever attempted by flyers based in the Middle East, August 13, 1943. In a round-trip mission of almost 2,500 miles, the B-24s did great damage to the huge Messerschmitt plane plant at Wiener Neustadt on the Danube River in Austria.

Leader "Ted" was Brigadier General (then Colonel) Edward J. TIMBERLAKE, Jr., of San Antonio, Texas and St. Petersburg, Florida, and a native of Ft. Hunt, Virginia.

Other Liberator commanders with notable records included: Colonel Frederick R. DENT, Jr., of Kerrville, Texas, the Army's FIRST glider pilot, and leader of the "Flying Eight Ball" group, who was wounded over Saarbruecken in June, 1944; Lieutenant Colonel Harvey BERNARD, of

Needham, Massachusetts and Buffalo, New York, acting commander of the FIRST Liberator group in Europe to complete 200 combat missions; Colonel James M. STEWART, of Hollywood, California and Indiana, Pennsylvania, the FIRST movie actor to do combat flying in Europe. He worked his way up to the post of combat wing commander in charge of 3,000 men after leading many raids on Nazi territory.

Another screen star, Lieutenant David NIVEN, of Hollywood, California, was the FIRST member of the movie colony to enter the war. He served six years with the British Army.

The FIRST pilot of the "V-Grand"—the 5,000th Liberator to be built—was Major William K. ZEWADSKI, Jr., of Tampa, Florida. This plane struck targets in seven countries in its first nine missions.

Lieutenant H. Gordon KRETCHMAR, of Flint, Michigan, was the FIRST to land a plane in America in the FIRST redeployment of heavy bombardment units from Europe after the conclusion of hostilities there.

SUPREME SACRIFICE

An engineer-gunner on a bomber was told to bail out when the plane was riddled by enemy shells after a mission to Leipzig, Germany. He refused because he did not want to desert his wounded pilot, unable to "hit the silk."

With another crewman, this flyer attempted to land the crippled plane, and they all crashed to death.

The hero was Sergeant Archibald MATHIES, of Finleyville, Pennsylvania, who became the FIRST member of the United Mine Workers of America to be awarded the Medal of Honor.

An Iowan who later became a high officer was the FIRST serviceman to man a gun on a plane. This occurrence during a time when training for aerial warfare was in its infancy was a forerunner of several promotions for Major

General (then Lieutenant) Jacob E. FICKEL, director of the consolidated Eastern and Central Technical Training Commands of the air force, with headquarters at St. Louis, Missouri and later of San Antonio, Texas. Fickel was president of the AAF Evaluation Board in Europe during the last year of the war.

Sergeant Paul E. MATHIS, of Bedford, Indiana, a tail gunner, was the FIRST Marauder bomber crewman in the European theater to complete 100 missions.

The FIRST enlisted crew member on a Marauder to complete fifty missions in western Europe was Sergeant James C. MOSSEY, of Washington, D. C. and Salem, Ohio, and a native of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

PILOT PIONEERS

Although there were two or three claimants to the distinction of shooting down the FIRST Nazi plane in World War II, records as late as June 1944 credited the feat to Lieutenant William S. BECK, of Nashville, Tennessee.

Another airman in the pioneering field was Lieutenant Raymond A. ANDERSON, of Taylor, Wisconsin. He was the FIRST pilot of a Black Widow (P-61) night fighter to score a victory over a German plane. The hostile craft was a Junkers 88.

Victor in the FIRST encounter with a new Nazi plane, a Messerschmitt 163, was Major Arthur F. JEFFREY, of San Francisco, California. This enemy rocket-propelled fighter, having great speed, was destroyed by the skipper of the American Lightning plane. Jeffrey, four months later, shot down three Nazi aircraft over Berlin.

Lieutenant John H. OLIPHANT, of Shreveport, Louisiana, was the FIRST pilot to engage in "fence-top" level bombing in a fighter plane. It was a close-up technique in which the targets were almost touched by the participating aircraft.

The FIRST flyer in an American uniform to serve in the

air force of Czechoslovakia was Lieutenant Albert BAYDOS, of Gary, Indiana, a Spitfire pilot. He was nominally a member of the U. S. "Blue Eagle Air Force."

Cub planes are the smallest aircraft in warfare, but their versatility is unequaled. Their principal chores are scouting, rescue, and spotter missions, and they can go out in weather which keeps other types of ships at home. One group in the European campaign which spent part of its time handling communications problems was commanded by Major J. M. PERCY, of New Orleans, Louisiana. His was the FIRST air-corps liaison squadron flying Stinson L-5s in combat.

Lieutenant Colonel Joseph GILLESPIE, of Savannah, Georgia, was commander of the FIRST night-photo reconnaissance squadron to be activated. He took a picture of a concentration of 700 freight cars at Saarbruecken, Germany, which were immediately afterward battered by 400 RAF heavy bombers.

The FIRST photo pilot to fly over Berlin was Major Walter L. WEITNER, of Yonkers, New York.

GO-GETTING GENERAL

The task of hammering Germany from the south was in charge of Lieutenant General Nathan F. TWINING, of Portland, Oregon, and a native of Monroe, Wisconsin. Commander of the 15th Air Force in the Mediterranean, his long-range bombing outfit destroyed 5,624 Axis planes in one year, and in the same period dropped nearly 200,000 tons of explosives over the Balkans, Greece, Germany, Italy, Austria, Poland, France, and Czechoslovakia.

General Twining first fought the Japs, and led the 13th Air Force when the FIRST raids were made against Rabaul from Solomons bases.

Lieutenant John S. BROMBERG, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, was the lead bombardier of an aerial task force in the FIRST American mission to drop essentials to patriots inside Warsaw, Poland.

An 11th Air Force officer, Lieutenant Colonel Jack N.

DONOHEW, of Slater, Missouri, was the FIRST airman to complete the evacuation of a cabin-type plane without loss of life.

Lieutenant Jack FISHER, of Fresno, California, a bombardier, was the FIRST man to escape death or wounding as one of the "guinea pigs" in a successful test of a new protective armor, on the order of that worn by the knights of the Middle Ages. A shell which exploded two feet away failed to pierce his armored vest.

The FIRST non-stop flight ever made between Natal and Casablanca was a preliminary operation in a program to speed up the transfer of American troops after the European war. The pilot of the C-54 in the preliminary trip was Major Walter A. ROSENFELD, of Rock Island, Illinois.

Lieutenant M. M. QUINT, Jr., of St. Louis, Missouri, was the FIRST serviceman in the 12th Armored (Hellcat) Division to be commissioned in Germany, and the FIRST in the antiaircraft personnel to be given a field commission.

CHAPTER 15

LAST WARFARE IN EUROPE

Adolph Hitler committed suicide on May 1, after the Russians stormed into Berlin.

Benito Mussolini had been executed by a group of Italian Partisans three days earlier.

These were reverberating events leading up to the final capitulation of the enemy in Europe.

Leaders of the groggy remnants of the Fuehrer's once mighty war machine "threw in the sponge" only after "taking it on the chin" in the last fighting of consequence on the Southern Front during the final week of April.

Patton's 3d Army was still rolling forward in Czechoslovakia and Austria, with all but a few of its main objectives attained.

Further south, however, Patch's 7th Army encountered greater obstacles in experiencing one of its most successful and momentous weeks of the war.

The fall of Stuttgart, on April 23, was the signal for a rapid thrust of conquest in the direction of Munich, 115 miles to the southeast. Beyond that was the goal of plunging across the neck of Austria and through the once impregnable Brenner Pass to join up with the 5th Army in Italy.

Stuttgart, leading industrial city of south Germany, was encircled and seized by the 100th (Century) Division, aided by the French 1st Army. The American commander was Major General Withers A. BURRESS, of Richmond, Virginia, captor of Bitche, when for the FIRST time in history that French fortress gave in to enemy besiegers.

The foothills of the Alps were reached in a roaring thirty-mile dash on the 23d by the 12th Armored (Hellcat) Division, commanded by Major General Roderick ALLEN, of Marshall, Texas. Lauingen was captured. General Allen's tanks had previously won acclaim for their feat in finding the FIRST opening past tough Nazi defensives in the drive through Odenwald Forest.

DANUBE DANGER

The beginning of a hectic campaign on both sides of the Danube River, in which both the 3d and 7th Armies participated, was paced by the establishment of the FIRST bridgehead on the south bank of the stream by the 12th Armored. Infantrymen of that outfit, led by Brigadier General Riley F. ENNIS, of Paulding, Ohio, won the role of being the FIRST to reach the other side.

Other infantrymen of the 7th Army joining in the operation on the 24th were from the 3d (Marne) and the 4th (Ivy) Divisions, the latter led by Major General Harold W. BLAKELEY, of Washington, D. C. and Malden, Massachusetts, who sent the FIRST regiment onto the beaches on D-day in France.

The perilous proceedings involved capturing the city of

Dillingen and crossing the bridge there before the Germans could blow the structure up. The Nazi garrison proved unequal to the occasion, as 1,000 of their number were taken prisoner by a task force led by Lieutenant Colonel Clayton (Doc) WELLS, of Abilene, Texas and Indianapolis, Indiana. This commander was the FIRST American to reach the bridge.

Sergeant J. Ogden HUSTON, of Spokane, Washington, was the FIRST soldier to step onto the span.

The FIRST tank to go across the river was led by Lieutenant Charles IPPOLITO, of Bronx, New York. The bridge was saved in a matter of minutes from being destroyed by the enemy.

KEY KILLINGS

Key cities standing in the path of a sweep to engulf Munich were Ulm and Augsburg.

The former, a Danube stronghold of 60,000 inhabitants, was a prey to the French Army and the 44th Infantry Division, led by Major General William F. DEAN, of Carlyle, Illinois and Salt Lake City, Utah. This was the FIRST time Ulm had bowed to an enemy since the Austrian Army surrendered there to Napoleon in 1805.

Bavaria's third city of Augsburg surrendered to the 3d Division of Major General John W. (Iron Mike) O'DANIEL, of Newark, Delaware and Atlanta, Georgia, on the 28th, after four days of siege. The FIRST officer to send a force into the city for the final assault was Major John O'CONNELL, of Macon, Georgia and Bronx, New York.

A legendary figure in the Italian campaign, O'Connell gained his reputation as a spearheader after many hard knocks. He had been a teen-age guerilla with Irish Republicans before emigrating to America. Then he organized a company of GI-commandos specializing in night scouting missions. His "snoop troops" adopted the motto: "No man's land is our land."

It was in a night mission, just before daybreak, that the

Irish-born officer barged into Augsburg in a fighting operation that ended with the capture of Major General Franz Fehn, the Wehrmacht garrison commander.

Lieutenant James MORRIS, of Hagerstown, Maryland, was the FIRST officer to barge into the enemy citadel with jeeps to haul the enemy general and fifteen of his staff officers into a prisoner's cage.

AUSTRIAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

While thus compressing Munich into a huge nutcracker, another momentous operation was being executed by other forces of the 7th Army on the extreme south. Tank columns broke over the German border into Austria, knocking in the western extremity of Hitler's Alpine redoubt.

This was six days before the completion of a plunge for the FIRST junction with the 5th Army in Italy, spearheaded by the 103d Division commanded by Major General Anthony C. McAULIFFE, of Washington, D. C.

Undoubtedly the most sensational tank outfit operating in the last two weeks of the European war in the Bavarian-Austrian campaign was the 10th Armored commanded by Major General William H. MORRIS, Jr., of Washington, D. C. and Ocean Grove, New Jersey. A highlight accomplishment of this organization was the capture of Oberammergau, scene of the famous Passion Play, on the 29th, and the FIRST town in Bavaria of unusual importance to fall to the 7th Army.

MUNICH MASTERED

Stubborn resistance by SS troops made the going tough for five American divisions converging on Munich, Germany's third largest city, on the 29th. Sharing in the capture of this northern bastion of the enemy's Alpine redoubt, on the following day, were O'Daniel's 3d Division and the 42d (Rainbow) Division, led by Major General Harry J. COLLINS, of Chicago, Illinois.

The famous beer cellar where Hitler, on November 8, 1923, declared, "The German revolution has started," was seized by the 42d, which was the FIRST attacking unit to enter Munich.

One of the doughboy participants here was Sergeant Harry R. BELL, of Washington, D. C. He was the FIRST man drawn into the draft, on October 29, 1940. He was wounded and decorated during his service in France and Germany.

PRIZE PRISONERS

Germany's top military strategist, Field Marshal General Karl Rudolph Gerd von Rundstedt, was captured five miles south of Munich. A detachment led by Lieutenant Joseph E. BURKE, Jr., of St. Petersburg, Florida and Columbia, South Carolina, and a native of Jacksonville, Florida, surprised the Nazi leader at his home in the little spa of Bad Toelz. It was the FIRST combat assignment for Burke after getting a battlefield commission promoting him to a lieutenant. When captured in the Vosges foothills, and later released the previous month, the southerner had been a private.

The 36th Division of Major General John W. DAHLQUIST, of St. Paul, Minnesota, and a native of Minneapolis in the same state, which was the FIRST outfit ashore in the invasion of Italy, assumed custody of Von Rundstedt. Major General Frank W. MILBURN, of Indianapolis, Indiana, and a native of Jasper in the same state, conducted the FIRST interview with the famous prisoner.

Franz von Papen, Germany's former chancellor, was seized near Leipzig by 9th Army glider troops under Major General Harry L. TWADDLE, of Clarksville, Ohio, of the 95th Division, who launched the FIRST offensive of the 3d Army in the Saar.

The notorious prison camp at Dachau, northwest of Munich, was captured on the day the latter city fell.

Lieutenant Colonel Will COWLING, of Leavenworth,

Kansas, was the FIRST American to enter the enclosure, being directed in the task by Brigadier General Henning LINDEN, of Muskogee, Oklahoma and South Minneapolis, Minnesota, deputy commander of the Rainbow Division.

"Frederick's Raiders" (45th Division) were co-liberators of the 32,000 political prisoners found in the camp.

REINHARDT RECEIVES RUSSIANS

Severance of Germany became an accomplished fact when a junction of the American and Russian Armies took place on the Elbe River, on April 25.

The occurrence was hailed as "a symbolic triumph in the prelude to final victory."

General Hodges' 1st Army brought about the merger at Torgau, 58 miles south of Berlin. The FIRST contact was made by elements of the 69th Infantry Division, commanded by Major General Emil F. REINHARDT, of Detroit, Michigan, and a native of Bay City in the same state.

Colonel Charles M. ADAMS, of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, leader of the 273d Regiment, sent out the FIRST patrols to go in search of the Russians.

About 24 hours prior to the link-up, the FIRST direct radio contact with advancing Russians was made by Sergeant Alexander J. BALTER, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His feat recalled a startling experience in the previous year near Brest, France.

A former traveling salesman and a smooth talker, Balter "sold" 750 Nazis on the idea of surrendering. He went to enemy headquarters in three trips past the German lines to complete his transaction.

An earlier Russian-American contact had been made in the sky nine days prior to the merging of ground forces. Lieutenant Robert L. FREEMAN, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, led four Lightning planes in the FIRST tactical joining of the East and West air-fighting fronts as pilots of the two

friendly nations met and exchanged greetings over the central Germany battle area.

The FIRST infantry patrol to contact the Russians was a 28-man "task force" led by Lieutenant Albert L. KOTZEBUE, of Houston, Texas. These soldiers, traveling in six jeeps, came upon the Red Army at 1:32 P.M., four miles west of Riesa on the Elbe.

Another patrol, in charge of Lieutenant William D. ROBERTSON, of Los Angeles, California, gained credit for the FIRST link-up at Torgau, the official and prearranged junction point. The meeting with the Soviet soldiers in the middle of the afternoon came as a surprise to this group. Robertson had been sent out that morning to aid in chasing German civilians off the roads.

The FIRST American to go across the Elbe Bridge in Robertson's advance to meet the Soviet outfit at Torgau was Private Paul STAUB, of Bronx, New York.

In the official junction on the following day, the 5th Corps commander, Major General Clarence R. HUEBNER, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Bushton, Kansas, became the FIRST U. S. officer to meet a Russian general formally at the front.

The FIRST junction of Simpson's 9th Army with the Russians occurred at Apollensdorf, on the 30th, under the auspices of the 83d Division, commanded by Major General Robert C. MACON, of Washington, D. C. The link-up served to widen the military corridor bisecting the Reich into north and south areas of resistance.

Lieutenant Charles G. BARRETT, of Montana, and Amherst, Massachusetts, led the FIRST cavalry platoon into Apollensdorf in the operation uniting the troops of the two nations.

SURRENDER SERIES

Braunau, the town of Hitler's birth, was captured by tank units on the day the dictator committed suicide. The victor

was Major General John MILLIKIN, of Danville, Indiana, commander of the 13th Armored Division, who had led the FIRST corps to reach Remagen when the Rhine bridge was captured there.

Lieutenant Colonel Ridgeway SMITH, of Greenwich, Connecticut, was the FIRST officer across the Inn River when Hitler's birthplace was seized.

Almost at the same time, Milliken's 3d Army tankmen liberated 11,000 Allied prisoners, including 4,100 Americans.

Then, on the following day, May 2, the versatile general accepted the surrender of the Hungarian Army of 300,000 men.

The roof was now caving in on what was left of Germany's homeland resistance. May 2 also saw the capture of Berlin by the Russians and the surrender of the Reich and Italian Fascist armies in northern Italy and western Austria.

Forty-eight hours later, the enemy gave up in Holland, Denmark, and northwest Germany.

On the same day, remnants of two German armies surrendered to the 102d Division of Major General Frank A. KEATING, of Ridgewood, New Jersey, and a native of New York City, in the Magdeburg area west of Berlin on the 9th Army Front.

The proceedings brought the FIRST complete combat lull of the war for Simpson's Army since it had gone into combat in France.

DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENTS

The last two days of serious warfare for the 7th Army—May 4 and 5—were crowded with drama, although the enemy no longer offered organized resistance.

The American flag flew over Hitler's famous mountain hideout at Berchtesgaden for the FIRST time, on the command of Colonel John A. HEINTGES, of Portland, Maine, after the city had been captured by a 3d Division task force led by Colonel Kenneth WALLACE, of Spartanburg, South Carolina.

It was here that a German SS general later disclosed the hiding place of Heinrich Himmler's personal treasure. The FIRST American to reach the \$1,000,000 currency hoard was Captain Harry ANDERSON, of Ossining, New York, a military government official. The Nazi Gestapo had concealed money gathered in 26 countries under a barn.

Captain John W. BRYANT, of Milton, Massachusetts, was the FIRST American military governor to serve at Berchtesgaden.

Neighboring Salzburg, with 60,000 inhabitants, fell easy prey to O'Daniel's 3d Division and the 20th Armored Division of Major General Orlando WARD, of Denver, Colorado, and a native of Macon, Missouri, who took the FIRST tanks into the city.

This operation was the signal for a general debacle of the enemy fighting forces on the Southern Front. General Ward was a pacemaker in bringing final frustration to the foe when he accounted for a big bag of prisoners during a 25-mile race across Bavaria to the Munich and Salzburg areas. His prize captures included four Reich generals.

Spearheader of the entrance of infantrymen into Salzburg, Brigadier General Robert YOUNG, of Bethesda, Maryland, assistant commander of the 3d Division, soon became a key figure in the complete downfall of two German armies.

FURIOUS FINISH

The final round of events for Patch's 7th Army included a 35-mile drive across the Alps into Italy to link up with the 5th Army, conqueror of Italy.

The advance began at Innsbruck, which was captured by a regimental task force led by Lieutenant Colonel Teal THERRELL, of Bennettsville, South Carolina. He was FIRST in command in the last war action of the 103d Division in Austria. The 250 SS troops remaining in Innsbruck offered no resistance.

The 7th Army, which had hopped off from Italy to invade southern France, returned to Italy to complete a 700-

mile circuit of southern Europe. Crossing the snow-covered mountains past Brenner Pass, the 103d Division of General McAuliffe was the FIRST unit to get back on Italian soil, linking up with the 5th Army's 88th (Blue Devil) Division commanded by Major General Paul W. KENDALL, of Palo Alto, California and Denver, Colorado, and a native of Baldwin, Kansas.

Lieutenant Leo GIOVANNINI, of Eveleth, Minnesota, rode in a forward jeep, carrying with him the FIRST U. S. flag to be brought from Germany across Austria and into Italy.

Back in Austria, the German 1st and 19th Armies gave up on May 5. Major General Edward H. BROOKS, of Concord, New Hampshire, commander of the 6th Corps, accepted the unconditional surrender of the 19th at Innsbruck. Six days earlier Brooks' outfit had captured the FIRST important town in Bavaria to fall—Oberammergau.

The FIRST announcement that "all is over" on the extreme Southern Front was made by General Jacob L. DEVERS, of York, Pennsylvania, commander of the 6th Army Group.

FINAL FIRING

Patton's 3d Army was now the only Allied outfit with enemy forces still to contend with. One German army—the 7th—remained at large.

The latter fell back towards Prague as the important city of Linz, Austria, was captured on the 5th by the 11th Armored Division of Brigadier General Willard A. HOLBROOK, Jr., who was born at Fort Grant, Arizona. The 11th was the FIRST 3d Army unit to drive across Luxembourg in the previous February.

The last city to fall in the European war was Pilsen. A newcomer in Europe, the 16th Armored Division, engaged in its FIRST combat action at this Nazi citadel of 150,000 population, with Brigadier General John L. PIERCE, a native of Dallas, Texas, in command.

The combat team making the FIRST entry into Pilsen, on May 6, was led by Colonel Charles NOBLE, of San Antonio, Texas.

The only opposition was put up by die-hard snipers who began their Sunday shooting when the FIRST tanks went in under the direction of Lieutenant Henry KARR, of Detroit, Michigan.

Pilsen was the easternmost point reached in Czechoslovakia by Patton's famous 3d.

The Russians were contacted for the FIRST time by the 3d Army, in an operation under the direction of Major General Holmes E. DAGER, of Union and Asbury Park, New Jersey, on the 7th.

That night the LAST shot of the war in Europe was fired near Klenovice, Czechoslovakia. The FIRST officer to make the claim in behalf of his regiment was Major H. W. THOMPSON, of San Bernardino, California. The man who discharged the gun was Private Domenic MOZZETTA, of Providence, Rhode Island. The company commander in this historic occurrence was Captain Homer KNIGHT, of Georgetown, Kentucky.

Brigadier General Milton B. HALSEY, of Huntsville, Alabama, commanded the 97th Infantry Division whose elements participated in this incident when the enemy put up disorganized resistance a few hours before a general "cease firing" order went into effect. Halsey was the key officer in teaming up with the new 15th Army when the latter engaged in its FIRST operations of the war.

ENEMY ELIMINATED

Germany capitulated on May 7, at 2:41 A.M.

Unconditional surrender was imposed at a meeting in Rheims, France, headquarters of General Eisenhower.

It was the FIRST of two official surrender ceremonies. Signer for the United States was Lieutenant General Walter B. SMITH, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Colonel General Jodl, new chief of staff for the Wehrmacht, signed for the Reich. Representatives of Britain, Russia, and France were the other signatories.

A second surrender signing was staged two days later in Berlin to placate the Russians, who wanted a ceremony within their own lines.

Major General John R. DEANE, of San Francisco, California, commander of the U. S. Military Mission, was in charge during the FIRST authorized entry of Americans into Berlin after its capture, flying there by plane from Washington for the second surrender event.

The radio operator of a C-54 transport plane on the flight, Sergeant Robert J. JOHNSON, of St. Louis, Missouri and Birmingham, Alabama, made the FIRST American transmission of a radio message from Berlin.

The FIRST American soldier to enter Berlin was Sergeant John WILSON, of Roxbury, Massachusetts. He was a jeep driver engaged for the trip to carry in two newspaper correspondents. This was on April 27, four days before the city fell to the Reds.

The European War was declared officially ended one minute past midnight, on May 9.

On the same day occurred the surrender of Reichsmarshal Hermann Goering, No. 2 Nazi. Personally accepting the capitulation was Brigadier General Robert I. STACK, of Schenectady, New York and Detroit, Michigan, assistant commander of the 36th Division, which was the FIRST comparative unit ashore in the invasion of Italy.

Another surrender item pertained to faraway western France. Long-besieged enemy garrisons in the St. Nazaire and Lorient pockets gave up on the 8th to the 66th Division of Brigadier General Herman F. KRAMER, of Lincoln, Nebraska, whose troops were the FIRST to assume peacetime operation of the port of Marseilles.

BERLIN BREVITIES

American occupation troops entered Berlin the FIRST time on July 3, being elements of the 2d Armored Division commanded by Major General Isaac D. WHITE, of Des Moines, Iowa, and a native of Petersboro, New Hampshire.

The FIRST U.S. enlisted man to go into the German capital was Sergeant Clarence A. MILLER of Picher, Oklahoma.

Private Harvey NATCHEES, of Ute Indian Reservation, Utah, was the FIRST American soldier of occupation to enter the Russian-held center of Berlin. He drove a jeep down Unter den Linden.

The FIRST combat group to reach the city was led by Captain James W. MOONEY, of Conrad, Montana.

Two weeks later, the Big Three held its FIRST conference on the outskirts of Berlin. President Truman went abroad for the meeting on the cruiser *Augusta*, commanded by Captain James H. FOSKETT, of Strafford, Pennsylvania.

Another noteworthy ceremony occurred on July 20, when the FIRST American flag was raised over Berlin. The same flag had been on the U. S. Capitol Building on the day war was declared on Japan, and had also flown over Rome.

Corporals Wilbur RICHARD, of Portland, Indiana, and Frederick J. DANGELO, of Wilmerding, Pennsylvania, shared the handling of the flag lines.

Major Clifford P. SCHROFF, of Royal Oak, Michigan, was the commander of an engineers combat battalion which used German lumber to make the pole used in hoisting the emblem.

The FIRST commander of the American-held portion of Berlin was Major General Floyd L. PARKS, of Greenville, South Carolina, and a native of Louisville, Kentucky.

Airborne troops chosen as successors of the 2d Armored to take over occupation of the American zone of Berlin, on August 19, elected the jumping method of entry. Major General James N. (Slim Jim) GAVIN, of Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania, shared with Colonel William ECKMAN, of St.

Louis, Missouri, the distinction of being the FIRST to "hit the silk" over Berlin. It was Gavin's 57th jump of the war.

Colonel Seth GAYLE, Jr., of Richmond, Virginia, assumed charge of the FIRST American hospital in Berlin. A similar role was taken by Lieutenant Colonel Ralph SHILLING, of Columbus, Ohio, at Vienna, Austria.

FINAL FORMALITIES

General Omar N. BRADLEY, of Moberly, Missouri, and a native of Clark in the same state, commander of 1,000,000 soldiers during hostilities, was the FIRST United States general to head occupation forces in Germany.

The FIRST American to hold the post of chief of civil affairs in the U. S. zone of occupied Germany was Lieutenant General Lucius D. CLAY, of Washington, D. C., and a native of Marietta, Georgia.

Major General Hugh J. GAFFEY, of Hartford, Connecticut, and a native of Austin, Texas, became military governor of the FIRST provincial government of postwar Germany. The new political division was known as the "Saar-Pfalz-Rhein-Hessen Region."

The FIRST organization to deal with any Reich resistance was in charge of Major General Ernest L. HARMON, of Vienna, Vermont, holding the title of Chief of the Mobile U. S. Constabulary Force, with 30,000 troopers assigned to police and control the zone after the departure of the first occupation forces.

Other highlights in early occupation annals involved: Captain Kurt L. WALITSCHEK, of Oakland, California, who presided over the FIRST military government court set up inside Germany; Sergeant John C. WOODS, of San Antonio, Texas, and a native of Wichita, Kansas, executioner in the hanging of three Germans while carrying out the verdict of the FIRST civilian war-crimes case tried in the Reich after the surrender; Captain Walter F. DUNN, Jr., of Bronx, New York, American Army administrator of Weimar, Germany, who directed the departure of the FIRST train to

carry refugees in the job of returning civilians to their home towns.

The task of writing an Army history while stationed at Bad Neuenhar, Germany, was necessarily abandoned by Major William F. KNOWLAND, of Oakland, California, when he became the FIRST Army officer to be named to the United States Senate. He succeeded the late Hiram Johnson, and was the youngest legislator in the upper branch of Congress.

INDEX OF VETERANS

An *M* following name indicates that serviceman won the Medal of Honor

ALABAMA

AUBURN

Knapp, Brig. Gen. R. D., 50

AUTAUGAVILLE

Broadnax, Pvt. Arthur, 121

BIRMINGHAM

Donaldson, Lt. Col. J. M., 107

Johnson, Sgt. R. J., 314

McAdams, Capt. James, 270

Strickland, Brig. Gen. A. C., 24

York, Col. R. H., 235

BLOCTON

West, Sgt. K. L., 124

HARTSELLE

York, Col. R. H., 235

HUNTSVILLE

Halsey, Brig. Gen. M. B., 286, 313

LINDEN

Ford, Lt. Joseph, 93

MONTGOMERY

Mathis, Capt. P. S., 16

Schaum, Jr., Lt. F. L., 83

SELMA

Hughes, Capt. F. M., 80

VINA

Davis, Lt. Lowell, 78

(No town designated)

Donovan, Maj. Gen. Leo, 211

ARIZONA

FORT GRANT

Holbrook, Jr., Brig. Gen. W. A.,
312

FORT HUACHUCA

Patch, Jr., Lt. Gen. A. M., 151,
261, 282

NOGALES

Gillem, Jr., Lt. Gen. A. C., 237, 258

PHOENIX

McGarr, Lt. Col. L. C, 67

TUCSON

Bandel, Lt. Col. Betty, 246

Culin, Jr., Maj. Gen. F. L., 187,
251, 288, 289

ARKANSAS

CAMDEN

Hickey, Brig. Gen. D. O., 266

De QUEEN

Tutt, Lt. Com. A. H., 111, 112

FAYETTEVILLE

McConnell, Maj. John, 168

Rhea, Capt. P. M., 109

FORDYCE

Porter, Maj. Gen. R. E., 270

FORT SMITH

Darby, Brig. Gen. W. O., 33, 123

Fitzgerald, Capt. Morris, 78

HAGARVILLE

Devers, Maj. Murray, 241

HOT SPRINGS

Carr, Lt. W. P., 204

LITTLE ROCK

Blakeney, Brig. Gen. J. L., 96

Wood, Maj. Gen. J. S., 148, 205

LONOKE

Britt, Capt. M. L., M, 58

PINE BLUFF

Hankins, Maj. Curtis Q., 276

TEXARKANA

Blankenship, Lt. Byron, 215

CALIFORNIA**ALHAMBRA**

Gormley, Jr., S. J., 49

ALAMEDA

Doolittle, Lt. Gen. J. H., 260

BEL-AIR

Bartlett, Maj. S. S., 295

BERKELEY

Dean, Maj. Gen. W. F., M, 305

BEVERLY HILLS

Rogers, Jr., Lt. Will, 202

BURBANK

Coyle, Lt. Col. O. W., 95

Pritchard, Jr., Lt. J. A., 85

CARMEL

Miller, Lt. Col. F. P., 63

CLEARWATER

Mokler, Lt. Lynn, 128

CORONA

Stewart, Lt. Col. J. C., 292

CORONADO

Hermle, Brig. Gen. L. D., 85

Stewart, Lt. Col. J. C., 292

ENCINITAS

Cole, Capt. J. W., 158

FORT MASONMiley, Maj Gen. W. M., 210, 260,
270**FRESNO**

Fisher, Lt. Jack, 303

Williams, Lt. G. L., 128

GLENDORA

Bollas, Capt. Sachal, 148

HOLLYWOOD

Brant, Capt. David, 178

Bray, Lt. J. M., 39

Corbus, Com. John, 114, 199

Losey, Capt. R. M., 269

Niven, Lt. David, 300

Stewart, Col. J. M., 300

KELSEYVILLE

Gunn, III, Lt. Col. J. A., 99

LONG BEACH

London, Capt. C. D., 130

O'Brien, Capt. J. C., 95

Shaffer, Capt. Joseph, 86

LOS ANGELES

Bachenheimer, Pvt. Theodore, 180

Barrow, Maj. L. J., 33

Brady, Capt. L. W., 147

Hills, Lt. H. H., 124

Hughes, Flight Officer J. D., 181

Karnes, Capt. E. C., 100

Melasky, Maj. Gen. H. O., 289

Monning, Lt. Col., J. C., 71

Montgomery, Lt. Com. Henry
(Robert), 110

Peterson, Col. C. G., 92

Robertson, Lt. W. D., 309

Sommer, Capt. L. J., 245

Wallace, Col. J. H., 293

Williams, Maj. Gen. P. L., 177

MERCED

Hodges, Corp. W. S., 13

NEVADA CITY

Chapman, Maj. Warren, 62

NORTH HOLLYWOOD

Russell, Maj. A. G., 95

OAKLAND

Emberson, Lt. C. B., 77

Hampton, Lt. Col. Henry, 74

Knowland, Maj. W. F., 317

Walitschek, Capt. K. L., 316

PALO ALTO

Kendall, Lt. Gen. P. W., 312

Strickland, Brig. Gen. A. C., 24

PASADENA

Benedict, Maj. W. P., 292

Ridenour, Brig. Gen. C. H., 102

Shaw, Capt. August, 227

Teas, Sgt. W. E., 158

PIEDMONT

Waybur, Lt. D. C., M, 52

PLYMOUTH

Begovitch, Sgt. J. C., 40

REDWOOD CITY

Wheeler, Lt. F. G., 49

REEDLEY

Newby, Maj. W. E., 26

RIVERSIDE

Crouch, Lt. Col. J. L., 105, 152

Worley, Maj. Robt., 60

SACRAMENTO

Bradley, Capt. D. E., 11

Kessler, Jr., Brig. Gen. A. A., 102

Lynn, Lt. R. J., 63

Metcalf, Lt. R. D., 269

SAN BERNARDINO

Thompson, Maj. H. W., 313

SAN DIEGO

Allison, Capt. T. J., 41

Lane, Capt. Robt., 101

Von Bracht, Lt. Com. Geo., 113,
114**SAN FRANCISCO**

Black, Col. P. S., 256

Butler, Brig. Gen. F. B., 155

Chamberlain, Capt. W. H., 280

Deane, Maj. Gen. J. R., 314

Frederick, Maj. Gen. R. T., 152,
274

Jeffrey, Maj. A. F., 301

Larkins, Capt. A. H., 229

Pratt, Brig. Gen. D. F., 105

Richards, Lt. Esther, 62

Tepuni, Ens. Wm., 77

SAN GABRIEL

Patton, Jr., Gen. G. S., 142

SAN JOSE

Mumford, Lt. Col. H. G., 295

Wheeler, Maj. C. E., 24

SAN QUENTIN

Benedict, Maj. W. P., 292

SANTA MONICA

Lerman, Lt. Col. B. L., 236

SEGUNDO

Saiz, Lt. Reinaldo, 296

SONOMA

Arnold, Gen. H. H., 90, 291

SOUTH PASADENA

Hills, Lt. H. H., 124

Terrell, Col. F. R., 18

Williams, Maj. Gen. P. L., 177

STOCKTON

Krout, Lt. R. T., 298

STUDIO CITY

Wilson, Lt. Col. Anna W., 247

UPLAND

Williams, Maj. Arthur, 87

VALLEJO

Larson, Maj. Gen. W. T., 77

Morris, Boat. Mate L. M., 12

VENTURA

Wangeman, Lt. Col. H. O., 129

VERNALIS

Larson, Maj. Gen. W. T., 77

WHITTIER

Garman, Col. R. S., 16

(no town designated)

Winters, Capt. J. R., 135

COLORADO**BELLVUE**

Maxwell, Corp. R. D., M, 156

DENVER

Bell, Col. R. P., 167, 192

Borchert, Lt. J. A., 108

Gem, Sgt. Lee Wong, 19

Kendall, Lt. Gen. P. W., 312

Lentz, Lt. Col. Jerome, 272

Rose, Maj. Gen. Maurice, 171, 184,
208, 238, 266

Ward, Maj. Gen. Orlando, 311

Watanabe, Pvt. Iris, 247

GRANADABarton, Sr., Maj. Gen. R. O., 147,
209**GREELEY**

Hobbs, Capt. H., 177

CONNECTICUT

BLACK POINT

Kirk, Adm. A. G., 31, 108

GLENBROOK

Phillips, Com. K. C., 88

GREENWICH

Smith, Lt. Col. R., 310

HARTFORD

Britton, Lt. Col. F. K., 254

Gaffey, Maj. Gen. H. J., 205, 250, 316

Hardin, Brig. Gen. T. O., 17

LITCHFIELD

Dister, Lt. Alexis, 26

MIDDLETOWN

Rose, Maj. Gen. Maurice, 171, 184, 208, 238, 266

NEW HAVEN

Ellsberg, Capt. Edw., 40

Thompson, Pvt. Curtis, 141

ROCKVILLE

Klette, Lt. Immanuel, 129

THOMASTON

Reilly, Pvt. James, 160

DELAWARE

NEWARK

O'Daniel, Maj. Gen. J. W., 268

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WASHINGTON

Allen, Lt. Col. K. N., 268

Anderson, Jr., Maj. Gen. F. L., 297

Andrus, Maj. Gen. Clift, 200, 219

Bell, Sgt. H. R., 307

Blakely, Maj. Gen. H. W., 225, 275, 304

Bolling, Sr., Maj. Gen. A. R., 192, 206, 278

Clay, Lt. Gen. L. D., 316

Criswell, Lt. Col. H. D., 263

Davis, Jr., Col. B. O., 30

Dister, Lt. Alexis, 26

Doolittle, Lt. Gen. J. H., M, 260

Eiland, Com. R. T., 94

Equils, Chief Officer W. A., 29

Haislip, Lt. Gen. W. N., 168, 261

Hasbrouck, Maj. Gen. R. W., 146, 202, 265

Hibbs, Maj. Gen. L. E., 249, 276

Hobbs, Maj. Gen. L. S., 137, 172, 189, 258, 286

Hoy, Lt. Col. C. J., 12

Huebner, Maj. Gen. C. R., 188, 261, 309

Irwin, Maj. Gen. Leroy, 167, 192, 201, 231, 255

Isbell, Capt. A. J., 79

Jones, Maj. Gen. A. W., 197

Lane, Lt. Col. T. A., 46

Lanham, Brig. Gen. C. T., 185, 225

Macon, Maj. Gen. R. C., 207, 235, 267, 284, 309

Maxwell, Maj. Gen. Russell, 27

McAuliffe, Maj. Gen. A. C., 198, 251, 306

Morris, Jr., Maj. Gen. W. R., 203, 231, 253, 276, 306

Mossey, Sgt. J. C., 301

Newman, Jr., Brig. Gen. J. B., 116

Patch, Jr., Lt. Gen. A. M., 151, 261, 282

Quesada, Maj. Gen. E. R., 139

Rhea, Capt P. M., 109

Smith, Lt. Gen. W. B., 313

Truesdell, Jr., Col. Karl, 297

Wallace, Col. J. H., 293

Weyland, Gen. O. P., 256

Wilson, Maj. Grover, 40

Young, Maj. Gen. R., 311

FLORIDA

DADE CITY

Diffenwierth, Capt. H. W., 245

DE FUNIAK SPRINGS

Sconiers, Lt. Swart, 90, 91

GAINESVILLE

Cota, Maj. Gen. N. D., 222

JACKSONVILLE

Barton, Sr., Maj. Gen. R. O., 147,
209

Burke, Jr., Lt. J. E., 307

MIAMI

Hoag, Brig. Gen. E. S., 268

ORLANDO

Saville, Brig. Gen. G. P., 153

ST. PETERSBURG

Burke, Jr., Lt. J. E., 307

Dean, Col. F. M., 124

Timberlake, Jr., Maj. Gen. E. J.,
299

SARASOTA

North, Lt. H. R., 41

TAMPA

Burke, Jr., Lt. J. E., 307

Nelson, Lt. T. B., 298

Zemke, Col. H. C., 291

Zewadski, Jr., Maj. W. K., 300

WINTER PARK

Saville, Brig. Gen. G. P., 153

GEORGIA

ATLANTA

Anderson, Maj. Gen. John, 234

Hall, Col. J. G., 129

Horne, Lt. C. F., 64

Hurless, Col. B. F., 218, 234

O'Daniel, Maj. Gen. J. W., 51, 155,
222, 252, 283, 305

Strickland, Lt. Audrey, 21

AUGUSTA

Cherry, Lt. Col. H. T., 232, 253

Stelling, Capt. C. C., 23

Temples, Maj. A. K., 121

CALHOUN

David, Col. Wm., 128

DECATUR

Cairns, Lt. Col. Bogardus, 70

MACON

Amspoker, Lt. G. E., 236

Cherry, Lt. Col. H. T., 232, 253

Davis, Sgt. J. B., 72

Gerhardt, Maj. Gen. C. H., 138,
234

Maddox, Sgt. O. N., 184

O'Connell, Maj. John, 305

Yeager, Lt. Col. W. B., 66

MARIETTA

Clay, Lt. Gen. L. D., 316

PERRY

Hodges, Gen. C. H., 118, 171, 229,
284

ROYSTON

Phillips, Lt. Eugene, 40

SAVANNAH

Gillespie, Lt. Col. Jos., 302

Johnson, Lt. Gen. L. W., M, 98

TIFTON

Myers, Maj. H. T., 95

TOCCOA

Dean, Sgt. C. C., 214

Keller, Lt. E. W., 87

HAWAII

HONOLULU

Kiota, Sgt. Edw., 56

Nazu, Sgt. Yutaka, 56

Sousa, Capt. B. H., 67

Suzuki, Capt. Taro, 55

KAWAIHAE

Wada, Sgt. Dan., 56

IDAHO

HARRISON

Cerny, Col. John, 32

POST FALLS

Beck, Maj. J. L., 293

ILLINOIS

ALTON

Tyler, Pvt. Eugene, 166

BENTON

Livesay, Maj. Gen. W. G., 73

CALUMET

Saam, Capt. Fred., 58

CARLYLE

Dean, Maj. Gen. W. F., *M*, 305

CARMI

Robertson, Maj. Gen. W. M., 161,
200, 221

CHICAGO

Bell, Lt. B. L., 125

Birks, Brig. Gen. H. D., 258

Budzdanowski, Sgt. E. S., 296

Collins, Maj. Gen. H. J., 249, 275,
282, 306

Danks, Lt. H. D., 153

Dorland, Sgt. Eugene, 241

Dunn, Maj. J. P., 201

Eddy, Maj. Gen. M. S., 250

Gallery, Capt. D. V., 79

Gem, Sgt. Lee Wong, 19

Hennessy, Lt. E. J., 296

Hoover, Sgt. Byron, 253

Hoy, Col. C. E., 237

Isbell, Capt. A. J., 79

Jakim, Lt. Col. Theodore, 146

Kolosky, Sgt. Wm., 140

Longini, Lt. Robt., 37

Petty, Capt. Mary, 246

Regisus, Pvt. Walter, 278

Rosekrans, Sgt. Virginia, 97

Shaheen, Lt. J. M., 47

Stone, Capt. Arthur, 57

Stuart, Capt. W. M., 158

Tepper, Chaplain Irving, 244

Thiers, Sgt. W. H., 118

Whitacre, Col. W. B., 107, 178

EAST ST. LOUIS

Dean, Col. F. M., 124

Wittkopf, Lt. W., 185

ELIZABETH

Fraser, Lt. Col. H. R., 248

EVANSTON

Bagby, Col. R. B., 106

Finley, Capt. Jas., 262

GALESBURG

Ives, Capt. N. S., 132

HIGHLAND PARK

Clark, Gen. M. W., 42, 43

Wilbur, Brig. Gen. W. H., *M*, 9

JOHNSON CITY

Samples, Sgt. John, 68

KANKAKEE

Goodman, Sgt. R. H., 262

KENILWORTH

Cutler, Capt. C. B., 27

KEWANEE

Anderson, Soundman H. W., 82

LAKE FOREST

Haffner, Jr., Maj. Gen. C. C., 195

LAWRENCEVILLE

Alexander, Jr., Lt. Jas., 262

LOCKPORT

Sanchez, Sgt. S. S., 296

MACOMB

Haulk, Sgt. W. M., 38

MAYWOOD

Jansen, Lt. Col. Ralph, 141

MOLINE

Carpenter, Maj. Chas., 149

MT. CARMEL

Lucas, Lt. R. L., 214

MT. MORRIS

Davis, Sgt. B. A., 95

OAKDALE

Maxwell, Maj. Gen. R. L., 27

OAKLAND

Nolan, Lts. Madonna & Agnes, 76

OAK PARK

Manning, Lt. J. B., 139

ROCKFORD

Kuler, Lt. Gen. L. S., 17

ROCK ISLAND

Rosenfield, Jr., Maj. W. A., 303

SUMMIT

Krzysztofiak, Pvt. W. P., 58

TAMPICO

Shaheen, Lt. J. M., 47

URBANA

Homfeld, Lt. Col. John, 144

WESTERN SPRINGS

Whitacre, Col. W. B., 107, 178

YORKVILLE

Langland, Lt. Lawrence, 37

INDIANA

ALBION

Eagles, Maj. Gen. W. W., 154

BEDFORD

Mathis, Sgt. P. E., 301

BLOOMINGTON

Kisters, Lt. G. H., M, 11

BRAZIL

Hall, Capt. Chas., 39

DANVILLE

Milliken, Maj. Gen. John, 240, 310

EAST CHICAGO

Booth, Capt. E. L., 36

EVANSVILLE

Barr, Corp. Ralph, 55

Nemer, Lt. Roscoe, 49

Wirthwein, Corp. Carl, 70

FORT WAYNE

Baade, Maj. Gen. P. W., 237, 279

Mahurin, Col. W. M., 292

FARMLAND

Marting, Flying Officer H. F., 19

GARY

Baydos, Lt. Albert, 302

HUNTINGTON

Seeley, Lt. W. D., 81

INDIANAPOLIS

Milburn, Maj. Gen. F. W., 222, 307

Robinson, Capt. F. L., 100

Smith, Lt. Gen. W. B., 313

Wells, Lt. Col. Clayton, 305

JASPER

Milburn, Maj. Gen. F. W., 222, 307

KNOX

Matthew, Capt. J. R., 193

LAFAYETTE

Milburn, Maj. Gen. F. W., 222, 307

Murphy, Lt. Col. M. C., 106

LINDEN

Michaels, Lt. Howard, 62

PERU

Arnold, Maj. Gen. W. R., 244

PORTLAND

Richard, Corp. Wilbur, 315

RUSHVILLE

Goodson, Sgt. Wm., 243

SPENCER

Finder, Sgt. John, 242

SPURGEON

Cato, Col. Ray, 152

TERRE HAUTE

Fox, Sgt. Harry, 228

VINCENNES

Kisters, Lt. G. H., M, 11

WEST LAFAYETTE

Halliday, Lt. Col. Geo., 45

IOWA

BURT

Fairbanks, Col. L. J., 150

CEDAR RAPIDS

Bell, Maj. Mary, 247

Clark, Jr., Lt. Col. R. R., 191

COLLEGE SPRINGS

Hansen, Maj. O. W., 245

CRESCO

Lowry, Rear Adm. F. J., 151

DES MOINES

White, Maj. Gen. I. D., 140, 206, 264, 283, 315

EMMONS

Gro, Lt. E. G., 175

FORT DODGE

Marchi, Lt. Col. Bruno, 75

IOWA FALLS

Teig, Lt. M. B., 239

KIMBALLTON

Larsen, Capt. Ethel, 22

LAKE CITY

Witmer, Lt. Col. L. G., 192

NEWTON

Marchi, Lt. Col. Bruno, 75

OTO

Isbell, Capt. A. J., 79

ROCKVILLE CITY

Hoyt, Lt. Lyle, 167

SHENANDOAH

Schneider, Lt. Col. Max, 44

SIBLEYGrow, Maj. Gen. R. W., 160, 212,
252, 272**SIOUX CITY**

Harrington, Maj. V. F., 96

Hoag, Brig. Gen. E. S., 268

Shugart, Lt. C. M., 182

STATE CENTER

Randall, Sgt. J. A., 12

SWEA CITY

Koons, Corp. Frank, 123

WEBSTER CITY

Herrick, Capt. Richard, 275

WEST DES MOINES

Barron, Sgt. Jack, 94

(no town designated)

Fickel, Maj. Gen. J. E., 301

Russell, Capt. Clyde, 131

KANSAS**ABILENE**Eisenhower, Gen. Dwight D., 8,
117, 142, 217**ATTICA**

Shannon, Capt. Paul, 127

AUGUSTA

Ramsdell, Lt. W. R., 60

BALDWIN

Kendall, Lt. Gen. P. W., 312

BUSHTONHuebner, Maj. Gen. C. R., 188,
261, 309**CEDAR VALE**

Cable, Lt. Marvin, 260

COFFEYVILLE

Savage, Lt. John, 293

DRESDEN

Winter, Capt. James, 240

ELLSWORTH

Lessig, Lt. Col. Cecil, 90

FORT LEAVENWORTH

Andrus, Maj. Gen. Clift, 200, 219

FORT SCOTT

Weber, Sgt. Elmer, 195

HAYS

Doerfler, Lt. Eugene, 131

Jacobs, Lt. I. S., 256

LEAVENWORTH

Baker, Col. Russel, 286

Cowling, Lt. Col. Will, 307

Sloan, Lt. W. B., 215

MOLINE

Johnson, Lt. Gen. L. W., M, 98

OSSAWATOMIE

Mount, Lt. W. J., 15

SCOTT CITY

Epperson, Lt. E. H., 78

WICHITA

Woods, Sgt. John C., 316

(no town designated)

Winters, Lt. Stanley, 183

KENTUCKY**BOWLING GREEN**

Walker, Maj. Harris, 166

CARROLTON

Thompson, Capt. W. P., 236

FORT THOMAS

Cook, Lt. Cordelia, 75

GEORGETOWN

Knight, Capt. Homer, 313

Smith, Capt. H. M., 256

HARTFORD

Barnett, Maj. Gen. A. J., 252

LEXINGTON

La Grew, Lt. Col. E. D., 212, 254

LOUISVILLE

Cloud, Jr., Maj. H. H., 243

Johnson, Sgt. Ralph, 66

Leopold, Ens. R. L., 88

Parks, Maj. Gen. F. L., 259, 315

Woods, Lt. Col. J. P., 280

Wymond, Lt. Col. G. O., 293

McKEE

Jones, Sgt. R. A., 243

MILTON

Butler, Capt. B. J., 57

PADUCAH

Kolb, Lt. Frank B., 185

PARIS

Allison, Lt. Col. Leslie, 145

WASHINGTON COUNTYMcLain, Lt. Gen. R. S., 189, 283
(no town designated)

Botts, Capt. Seth, 188

Townsend, Maj. James, 243

Stephenson, Lt. Joseph, 161

MAINE**ELLSWORTH**

Moore, Maj. Gen. B. E., 230, 277

LEE

Haskell, Maj. Warren, 232

PORTLAND

Heintges, Col. J. A., 310

LOUISIANA**ALEXANDRIA**

Salter, Lt. Alys, 48

ARCADIA

Smelley, Lt. Col. J. W., 245

ARCHIBALD

Gates, Maj. T. L., 177

BATON ROUGE

Bailey, Jr., Lt. J. A., 164

Middleton, Lt. Gen. T. H., 35, 197,
250**LAFAYETTE**

Jones, Col. G. M., 33

MONROE

Peterson, Capt. A. C., 228

NATCHITOCHES

Johnson, Lt. Col. O. B., 150

NEW IBERIA

Barrow, Maj. L. J., 33

NEW ORLEANS

Adams, Capt. Wm., 113

Barrow, Maj. L. J., 33

Collins, J. L. (Lightning), 132, 238

Jones, Col. G. M., 33

Percy, Maj. J. M., 302

Spiess, Lt. Col. F. G., 216

RAYVILLE

Reid, Capt. W. J., 244

SHREVEPORT

Bradley, Capt. J. L., 16

Kane, Col. J. R., M, 98

Oliphant, Lt. J. H., 301

MARYLAND**ANNAPOLIS**

Finley, Maj. Gen. T. D., 273, 288

Leary, Capt. Richard, 116

BALTIMORE

Andrejewski, Capt. J. A., 244

Bond, Lt. Col. R. B., 233

Gentry, Lt. R., 38

Jett, Capt. E. L., 245

McFord, Lt. L. L., 81

Myer, Pvt. Chas., 184

Saulsbury, Sgt. Gove, 170

Schroeder, Jr., Capt. L. T., 120

Taylor, Pvt. N. E., 22

Tinley, Maj. Phillip, 37

BEL AIR

Van Bibber, Lt. Col. E. M., 259

BETHESDA

Young, Maj. Gen. R. N., 311

BRUNSWICK

Kidwiler, Pvt. Geo., 181

CHANEY

Chaney, Maj. Gen. J. E., 90

CHEVY CHASE

Thatcher, Brig. Gen. H. B., 126

DUNDALK

Bull, Lt. W. L., 168

FREDERICK

Church, Maj. Gen. J. H., 233

HAGERSTOWN

Hartle, Maj. Gen. R. P., 90

Morris, Lt. James, 306

- MT. RANIER**
Smith, Mate S. B., 113
- REISTERSTOWN**
Haislip, Lt. Gen. W. H., 168, 261
- SILVER SPRINGS**
Connor, Jr., Lt. F. W., 68
- TOWSON**
Tinges, Lt. Anne, 247
- WESTMINSTER**
Geiglein, Maj. J. C., 234
Stone, Maj. W. C., 174
- MASSACHUSETTS**
- AMHERST**
Barrett, Lt. C. G., 309
- BOSTON**
Cleary, Capt. Timothy, 44
Jett, Lt. Col. Edgar, 181
Slanger, Lt. Frances, 174
- CAMBRIDGE**
Von Paulsen, Capt. C. C., 84
- CHARLESTON**
Foley, Sgt. Phillip, 31
- CHELSEA**
Cota, Maj. Gen. N. D., 222
- CLINTON**
Philbin, Lt. Col. T. R., 193
- EAST WEYMOUTH**
Johnson, Pvt. Eldon, M, 69
- GLOUCESTER**
Hancock, Capt. Walker, 239
Hobbs, Maj. Gen. L. S., 137, 172, 189, 258, 286
- HINSDALE**
Pochinchuk, Lt. J. G., 287
- HYDE PARK**
Pierce, Sgt. J. W., 203
- LAWRENCE**
Pellerin, Sgt. J. E., 163
- LOWELL**
Hall, Capt. R. S., 108, 244
Hallaren, Col. Mary, 121
- Harmon, Maj. Gen. E. N., 172, 205, 316
Zamanakes, Pvt. John, 108
- LYNN**
Hall. Chaplain Ray, 108, 244
- MALDEN**
Blakeley, Maj. Gen. H. W., 225, 275, 304
Lovell, Sgt. W. F., 14
- MARTHA'S VINEYARD**
Durfee, Com. Thos., 96
- MILTON**
Bryant, Capt. J. W., 311
- NEEDHAM**
Bernard, Lt. Col. Harvey, 299
- NORTH DARTMOUTH**
Greenwood, Lt. Edith, 246
- PALMER**
Wilbur, Brig. Gen. W. H., M, 9
- ROXBURY**
Frank, Lt. I. H., 294
Wilson, Sgt. John, 314
- SHREWSBURY**
Paul, Maj. Gen. W. S., 203, 252, 271
- STONEHAM**
Craigie, Maj. Gen. L. C., 65
- TURNERS FALLS**
Phillips, Com. K. C., 88
- WARE**
Hale, Lt. C. F., 39
- WEST NEWTON**
Abrams, Lt. Col. C. W., 204, 256
- WINCHESTER**
Smith, Rear Adm. E. H., 84
- WOLLASTON**
Rutan, Lt. F. S., 115
- WORCESTER**
Brosnan, Sgt. B., 181
Muir, Pvt. Francis, 62
Paul, Maj. Gen. W. S., 203, 252, 271
Thatcher, Brig. Gen. H. B., 126
(no town designated)
Zygmunt, Sgt. J. J., 59

MICHIGAN

BAY CITY

Reinhardt, Maj. Gen. E. F., 284,
308

CARO

Conant, Lt. Col. Perry, 251

CLIO

Lester, Pvt. J. A., 121

DETROIT

Denison, Capt. J. H., 188
Hatcher, Jr., Lt. Col. W. A., 290
Karr, Lt. Henry, 313
Kuhn, Capt. R. F., 101
Reinhardt, Maj. Gen. E. F., 284,
308

Robinson, Capt. R. K., 71
Snyder, Lt. E. K., 172
Stack, Brig. Gen. R. I., 314
Williams, Maj. Gen. P. L., 177
Wymond, Lt. Col. G. O., 293

FLINT

Kretchmar, Lt. H. G., 306

FOSTER CITY

Johnson, Jr., Sgt. O. G., *M*, 72

GRAND RAPIDS

Burch, Lt. A. F., 128
Fish, Lt. James, 55
Mossey, Sgt. J. C., 301

HANCOCK

Royce, Maj. Gen. Ralph, 27

KALAMAZOO

Grace, Lt. C. W., 113
Rose, Corp. R. E., 256

MARQUETTE

Royce, Maj. Gen. Ralph, 27

MUSKEGON

Neal, Maj. R. W., 61

PETOSKEY

Townsend, Pvt. J. E., 160

ROYAL OAK

Schroff, Maj. C. P., 315

THREE OAKS

Bihlmire, Lt. J. M., 130

MINNESOTA

EVELETH

Giovannini, Lt. Leo, 312

HUTCHINSON

Henke, Sgt. Milburn, 90

MINNEAPOLIS

Clark, Brig. Gen. H. L., 88
Dahlquist, Maj. Gen. J. W., 154,
252, 307
Engeman, Lt. Col. Leonard, 241
French, Lt. J. E., 255
Kenyon, Sgt. Kenneth, 123
Manning, Lt. J. P., 269
Norstad, Maj. Gen. Lauris, 15

OSAKIS

Anderson, Capt. D. B., 94

REDWOOD FALLS

Engeman, Lt. Col. Leonard, 241

ROCHESTER

Harper, Lt. Col. H. P., 243
Mason, Ensign D. F., 78

ST. PAUL

Colby, Maj. Wm., 268
Dahlquist, Maj. Gen. J. E., 154,
252, 307

Gerow, Lt. Gen. L. T., 119, 277
McNees, Col. F. J., 107, 177, 260
Ritchie, Maj. W. P., 21

SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS

Anderson, Sgt. M. H., 9
Linden, Brig. Gen. Henning, 308

VERNDALE

McNair, Lt. Gen. L. J., 139

MISSISSIPPI

BOONEVILLE

Hill, Lt. M. L., 207

COLUMBUS

Gooch, Jr., Lt. C. M., 265

DODDSVILLE

MacDonald, Lt. Col. L. E., 235

HAZELHURST

Middleton, Lt. Gen. T. H., 35, 197,
250

JACKSON

Reuning, Capt. A. E., 94

LUCEDALELindsey, Sgt. J. W., *M*, 190**NATCHEZ**

Junkin, Jr., Maj. S. S., 123

PASCAGOULA

Frost, Lt. Joe, 114

STARKVILLEMiley, Maj. Gen. W. M., 210, 260,
270**TUPELO**

MacDonald, Lt. Col. L. E., 235

VARDAMAN

Martin, Sgt. W. C., 14

MISSOURI**BOONVILLE**

Belke, Jr., Col. J. W., 288

Hoge, Lt. Gen. W. M., 241, 263,
281

Morton, Sgt. J. R., 143

BROOKFIELD

Pratt, Brig. Gen. D. F., 105

CLARKBradley, Gen. O. N., 117, 217, 262,
316**CLAYTON**

Sugg, Col. Douglas, 251

COLUMBIA

Baker, Maj. James, 243

Johnson, Lt. Gen. L. W., *M*, 98

Livesay, Maj. Gen. W. G., 73

Tindall, Sr., Brig. Gen. R. G., 96

CRYSTAL CITY

Livingstone, Lt. Col. J. J., 117

ELDORADO SPRINGS

McSherry, Brig. Gen. F. J., 55

HAYTI

Stanfill, Lt. Margaret, 121

KANSAS CITY

Martin, Lt. Col. K. R., 93

Morris, Lt. H. A., 146

KENNET

Coutts, Col. J. W., 270

KEYTESVILLETaylor, Lt. Gen. M. D., 107, 177,
203**LEXINGTON**Hoge, Sr., Lt. Gen. W. M., 241,
263, 281**MACON**

Ward, Maj. Gen. Orlando, 311

MAYSVILLE

Williams, Pvt. E. R., 161

MEADVILL

Gossick, Capt. L. V., 50

MEXICO

Bruce, Jr., Col. T. R., 212, 272

MOBERLYBradley, Gen. O. N., 117, 217, 262,
316**NEW HAVEN**

Bagby, Col. R. B., 106

OVERLAND

Capstick, Mach. Mate Malvern, 34

RICHMOND HEIGHTS

Withington, Capt. G. B., 37

ST. CHARLES

Maxwell, Maj. E. P., 182

ST. JOSEPH

Clark, Jr., Col. R. R., 191

Compton, Col. K. K., 101

McCutcheon, Lt. Wm., 195

Rosenbaum, Col. D. A., 202

ST. LOUIS

Baumhardt, Sgt. Leo, 228

Bell, Lt. C. R., 157

Berra, Capt. Chas., 140

Bowen, Pvt. Archie, 137

Brogger, Corp. J. H., 144

Brown, Capt. J. O., 254

Brundidge, 3d, Sgt. H. T., 28

Cassimatis, Capt. E. A., 127, 128

Davis, Flight Officer W. E., 130

Dean, Col. F. M., 124

Doolittle, Lt. Gen. J. H., *M*, 260

Eckman, Col. Wm., 315

Fickel, Maj. Gen. J. E., 301
 Fuerst, Pvt. R. J., 183
 Grimm, Jr., Sgt. Jas., 121
 Hancock, Capt. Walker, 239
 Heimer, Capt. R. C., 53
 Henderson, Jr., Lt. W. L., 21
 Hundley, Col. D. H., 229
 Johnson, Sgt. R. J., 314
 McKeage, Jr., Lt. T. E., 32
 Morrissey, Jr., Capt. J. C., 53
 Oberdan, Lt. Ivan, 180
 Quint, Jr., Lt. M. M., 303
 Reeves, Pvt. F. I., 32
 Robertson, Maj. Gen. W. M., 161,
 200, 221
 Ryder, Col. W. T., 35
 Tindall, Sr., Brig. Gen. R. G., 96
ST. MARY'S
 Hart, Lt. L. J., 70
SEDALIA
 Salisbury, Col. A. G., 25
SIKESTON
 Baker, Maj. Jas., 243
SKIDMORE
 Bilby, Maj. G. B., 318
SLATER
 Donohew, Lt. Col. J. N., 303
UNIVERSITY CITY
 Dorn, Boat Mate Russell, 9

MONTANA

BUTTE
 Johnson, Col. W. N., 189, 258, 278
CONRAD
 Mooney, Capt. J. W., 315
GREAT FALLS
 Caum, Col. N. C., 282
HELENA
 Brownell, Lt. R. B., 114
MILES CITY
 Wellems, Lt. Col. Edward, 220
MISSOULA
 Johnson, Col. W. M., 189, 258, 278
 Zemke, Col. H. C., 291

OVANDO

Johnson, Col. W. N., 189, 258, 278
 (no town designated)
 Barrett, Lt. C. G., 309

NEBRASKA

ELAIN

McBride, Maj. Gen. H. L., 204,
 253, 263, 271

FAIRBURY

Hurless, Col. B. F., 218, 234

FALLS CITY

Oliver, Maj. Gen. L. E., 237, 270

GRAND ISLAND

McKay, Pvt. D. L., 143

HASTINGS

Hermle, Brig. Gen. L. D., 85

LINCOLN

Dohrman, Lt. Col. A. C., 146
 Kramer, Brig. Gen. H. F., 314
 Mueller, Lt. Col. Waldmar, 195

NORTH PLATTE

Craig, Col. D. E., 231
 Miltonberger, Brig. Gen. B. B., 137

SEWARD

Dohrmann, Lt. Col. A. C., 146

VERDIGRE

Schmidt, Maj. Gen. W. R., 232, 287

WEST POINT

Timmerman, Lt. Carl, 242

NEW HAMPSHIRE

ALTON BAY

Ferry, Lt. Allen, 35

CONCORD

Brooks, Lt. Gen. E. H., 312
 Craigie, Maj. Gen. L. C., 65
 Muzzy, Capt. Worthing, 14

MANCHESTER

Zygmundt, Sgt. J. J., 59

MILFORD

Beaudrault, Capt. V. J., 186

PETERBORO

White, Maj. Gen. I. D., 140, 206
264, 283, 315

NEW JERSEY**ASBURY PARK**

Dager, Maj. Gen. H. E., 247, 271,
281, 313

BELLEVILLE

Bickell, Lt. Col. G. R., 298

CAMDEN

Walton, Corp. Thos., 108

CARTERET

Mutnam, Pvt. J. P., 182
Warkowitz, Lt. J. J., 145

CRANFORD

Culin, 3d, Sgt. C. G., 136

EAST ORANGE

Estes, Capt. Paul, 218

ELIZABETH

Kinaszcuk, Lt. Thos., 80

ENGLEWOOD

Protzman, Lt. Col. T. B., 54

HACKENSACK

Hewitt, Adm. H. K., 31, 151

HASBROUCK HEIGHTS

Balchen, Col. Bernt, 84, 85, 268

KEARNEY

Hergert, Capt. W. C., 134

MILVILLE

Vanaman, Brig. Gen. A. W., 290

MONTCLAIR

Bell, Col. R. F., 167, 192
Moore, Lt. R. L., 271

MT. HOLLY

Rosenfeld, Lt. Col. A. H., 9

NEWARK

Marshall, Lt. W. J., 162
Patrick, Lt. Com. W. T., 258
Wilson, Capt. R. W., 233

NUTLEY

Bickell, Lt. Col. G. B., 298
Clark, Capt. Howard, 280
Quigley, Lt. Col., H. E., 70

OCEAN GROVE

Morris, Jr., Maj. Gen. W. N.,
203, 231, 253, 276, 306

ORANGE

Duffy, Capt. Robt., 282

PATERSON

Hursh, Maj. Merritt, 168

PERTH AMBOY

Policastro, Lt. Joseph, 272

PLAINFIELD

Stone, Jr., Col. J. J., 92

RAHWAY

Reuter, Lt. Geo., 183

RED BANK

Dowd, Pvt. Edward, 196

RIDGEWOOD

Keating, Maj. Gen. F. A., 218, 227,
310

SALEM

Hall, Lt. Joseph, 213

SOUTH ORANGE

Leaf, Maj. C. C., 64

TRENTON

Tyson, Lt. A. E., 296

UNION

Dager, Maj. Gen. H. E., 247, 271,
281, 313

WESTFIELD

Ellsberg, Capt. Edward, 40
Stone, Jr., Col. J. J., 92
(no town designated)
Lauer, Maj. Gen. W. E., 248

WEST NEW YORK

Merz, Sgt. Harold, 135

NEW MEXICO**ALBUQUERQUE**

Bromberg, Lt. J. S., 302

CARLSBAD

Huckaby, Sgt. E. V., 169

MEXICAN SPRINGS

Etsitty, Pvt. Cliff, 248

SILVER CITY

Kilburn, Brig. Gen. Chas., 263

NEW YORK

ALBANY

Berg, Sgt. E. F., 13
Kelleher, Col. G. C., 238, 239

ARDSLEY ON HUDSON

Kouns, Col. C. W., 32

BABYLON

Lancer, Maj. T. F., 188

BELLROSE

McDaniel, Maj. V. E., 20

BINGHAMPTON

Miner, Lt. Col. Russel, 232

BRONX

Dunn, Jr., Capt. W. F., 316
Ippolito, Lt. Chas., 305
O'Connell, Maj. John, 305
Staub, Pvt. Paul, 309

BROOKLYN

Condiotti, Lt. Abraham, 113
Fisher, Lt. Com. J. H., 273
Lauer, Maj. Gen. W. E., 248
Newman, Corp. Carl, 159
Packer, Lt. Robt., 235
Palm, Lt. Carl, 194
Past, Capt. S. J., 181
Pearl, Capt. Jacob, 204
Rintoul, Capt. Herman, 245
Schneider, Lt. Col. G. L., 146

BUFFALO

Bernard, Lt. Col. Harvey, 299
Donovan, Maj. Gen. W. J., 267
Nowak, Sgt. Henry, 211

COLD SPRING HARBOR

McVicker, Col. Lansing, 204

DELEVAN

Krist, Pvt. Howard, 170

DUNDEE

Malony, Maj. Gen. H. J., 226, 250

EAST ROCKAWAY

MacNeish, Jr., Pvt. Wm., 97

EAST SYRACUSE

Hiller, Sgt. C. D., 183

FLUSHING

Corbett, Capt. Jocelyn, 97

FREDONIA

Hall, Com. F. S., 83

HEMPSTEAD

Driscoll, Lt. Col. Edmund, 194
Momyer, Col. W. W., 30

HIGHLAND FALLS

Devine, Maj. Gen. J. M., 259, 279

ILION

Bleau, Lt. Kennth, 120

JACKSON HEIGHTS

Miceli, Lt. J. J., 100

JAMESVILLE

House, Maj. Gen. E. J., 38

KINGSTON

Anderson, Jr., Maj. Gen. F. L., 297
Hasbrouck, Maj. Gen. R. W., 146,
202, 265

LAKEMONT

Malony, Maj. Gen. H. J., 226, 250

LARCHMONT

Condon, Lt. Col. R. E., 20

LONG ISLAND CITY

Bulkeley, Com. J. D., 110

LYNNBROOK

Driscoll, Lt. Col. E. F., 194

MADISON BARRACKS

Clark, Gen. Mark W., 42, 43

NEW ROCHELLE

Wilson, Lt. Sumner, 61

NEW YORK CITY

Axelson, Lt. Co. O. A., 182
Briggs, Jr., Capt. V. R., 183
Brown, Lt. R. C., 299
Brundige, 3d, Sgt. H. T., 28
Degner, Capt. L. A., 280
Davis, Jr., Col. B. O., 30
Doolittle, Lt. Gen. J. H., M, 260
Gavin, Maj. Gen. J. M., 136, 179,
198, 213, 315
Hunter, Maj. Gen. F. O., 291
Keating, Maj. Gen. F. A., 218, 227,
310
Kessel, Corp. B. J., 9
Kircher, Capt. Donald, 272
Leitman, Lt. Com. H. B., 133
Lowry, Rear Adm. F. J., 151
Nussbaum, Maj. H. L., 129

Oliver, Capt. Francis, 235
 Plitt, Maj. H. D., 105
 Raff, Col. E. D., 10, 279
 Sauer, Lt. Col. P. K., 48

NIAGARA FALLS

James, Pvt. H. E., 158

OSSINING

Anderson, Capt. Harry, 311

OYSTER BAY

Roosevelt, Maj. Quentin, 134
 Roosevelt, Jr., Brig. Gen. Theodore, M, 113

RICHMOND HILL

Whiteside, Rear Adm. W. J., 257

ROCHESTER

Maloney, Pvt. Margaret, 22
 Tierney, Sgt. Peter, 100

SCHENECTADY

Stack, Brig. Gen. R. I., 314

STATEN ISLAND

Jester, Sr., Lt. Com. M. D., 82

STONY POINT

Conklin, Lt. J. E., 116

SYRACUSE

Clark, Maj. Gen. B. C., 202
 Handville, Capt. Melvin, 175
 Hergert, Capt. W. C., 134
 House, Maj. Gen. E. J., 38
 Lillyman, Capt. Frank, 105, 108
 Yeomans, Lt. Col. Prentice, 214, 266

TROY

Harrington, Sgt. F. J., 147

WEST POINT

Craig, Maj. Gen. L. A., 191, 224, 277
 Devine, Maj. Gen. J. M., 259, 279
 Smith, Maj. Gen. A. C., 281, 290

WHITE PLAINS

Beaudarault, Lt. Valamore, 186

YONKERS

Weitner, Maj. W. L., 302

YORKVILLE

Keegan, Col. Chas., 212
 (no town designated)
 Bray, Lt. J. M., 39

Eminowicz, Lt. Halina, 97
 Marquis, Capt. Frances, 22

NORTH CAROLINA

ASHEVILLE

Buie, Col. W. D., 285

BERTIE COUNTY

Norfleet, Com. J. P., 83

DUNN

Lee, Maj. Gen. W. C., 260

ELON COLLEGE

Walker, Lt. Worth, 151

GREENSBORO

Lytle, Lt. Col. C. A., 165

HENDERSON

Pridgin, Capt. R. B., 155

KINGSTON

Elliott, Pvt. Mary, 97

NASHVILLE

Armstrong, Jr., Brig. Gen. F. A., 91

NEWTON

McCorckle, Col. C. M., 61

OCRACOE

Wyche, Maj. Gen. I. T., 132, 168, 259, 265

PAXTON

McConnell, Lt. Col. Edward, 149

PINEHURST

Wyche, Maj. Gen. I. T., 132, 168, 259, 265

RALEIGH

Best, Sgt. W. R., 97
 Craig, Maj. Gen. L. A., 191, 224, 277
 Nye, Col. G. C., 126
 Parker, Lt. Elizabeth, 246

RURAL HALL

Lancaster, Flight Officer C. M., 133

SOUTHERN TIMES

Welborn, Lt. Col. John, 239, 266

SPARTANBURG

Wallace, Col. Kenneth, 310

TARBORO

Gatling, Capt. Wm., 42

WAYNESVILLE

Stentz, Capt. Davis, 16

WILMINGTON

Johnson, Lt. J. T., 60

WINSTON-SALEM

Fort, Lt. Col. C. T., 71

(no town designated)

McCollum, Lt. Col. Paul, 175

NORTH DAKOTA

FAIRFIELD

Thompson, Lt. E. T., 216

FARGO

Critchfield, Lt. Col. J. H., 169

STREETER

Block, Lt. O. E., M, 73

OHIO

AKRON

Bertach, Capt. R. H., 226

Chilson, Sgt. L. M., 274

ASHLAND

Joseph, Pvt. F. D., 134

ASHTABULA

Magill, Lt. Sam, 159

ATHENS

Hively, Maj. Howard, 299

BLOOMVILLE

Haffner, Jr., Maj. Gen. C. C., 195

BUCYRUS

Teets, Maj. A. G., 55

CINCINNATI

Connor, Lt. Col. R. E., 210

Cook, Capt. W. V., 292

Lewis, Maj. C. H., 134

CLARKSVILLE

Twaddle, Maj. Gen. H. L., 307

CLAY CENTER

Rudes, Lt. Merrill, 288

CLEVELAND

Russo, Lt. M. T., 64

Teare, Lt. D. J., 63

Wildern, Jr., Lt. A. P., 293

COLUMBUS

Eddy, Maj. Gen. M. S., 250

Lemay, Maj. Gen. C. E., 127

Owens, Jr., Lt. W. V., 92

Shilling, Lt. Col. Ralph, 316

Walker, Maj. Gen. F. L., 45

Welch, Lt. Chas., 235

DAYTON

Olds, Pvt. Marjorie, 246

FAIRPORT HARBOR

Blakeslee, Col. Donald, 298

Riipa, Lt. A. A., 298

GIRARD

Misel, Pvt. Syl., 34

HOLLAND

Drabik, Sgt. A. A., 241, 242

LAKEWOOD

Le May, Maj. Gen. C. E., 127

LANCASTER

Rose, Lt. T. G., 76

LYNDHURST

Madison, Sgt. Laurence, 51

MANSFIELD

Folmer, Sgt. F. S., 297

Lahm, Brig. Gen. F. P., 130

MARTINS FERRY

McCrary, Lt. Col. M. G., 117

NORTH OLMSTEAD

Durning, Lt. Wm., 152

PAINESVILLE

Walter, Lt. Donald, 90

PAULDING

Ennis, Brig. Gen. R. F., 304

PIQUA

Gentile, Maj. D. S., 291

POLK

Reinhardt, Maj. Gen. S. E., 289

PORTSMOUTH

Penrod, Sgt. Chas., 243

READING

Trivett, Lt. Clyde, 220

SALEM

Mossey, Sgt. J. C., 301

SPRINGFIELD

Barnard, Lt. Suella, 245

STEUBENVILLE

Christian, Pvt. H. F., M, 69

TOLEDOLeonard, Maj. Gen. J. W., 203, 240,
265

Pinney, Pvt. J. S., 197

WAYNESVILLE

Barnard, Lt. Suella, 245

WILBERFORCE

Robinson, Jr., Lt. J. H., 192

WOOSTER

Arnold, Maj. Gen. W. R., 244 .

YOUNGSTOWN

Swaney, Capt. Edith. 37

(no town designated)

Towle, Pvt. J. R., M, 179

OKLAHOMA**ADA**Barton, Sr., Maj. Gen. R. O., 147,
209**BACONE**

Omonhundro, Capt. Thomas, 49

BARTLESVILLE

Boyd, Lt. A. M., 72

Turner, Lt. Col., R. E., 161

BRISTOW

Brown, Jr., Lt. Q. L., 292

EDMUND

McLain, Lt. Gen. R. S., 189, 283

ELK CITY

Bales, Lt. R. B., 55

EL RENO

Kegelman, Col. C. C., 91

ENID

Griffin, Lt. Ross, 181

EUFALA

Truscott, Lt. Gen. L. K., 123, 151

HENRYETTA

Gibble, Capt. Wm., 244

Rodriguez, Capt. L. L., 215

LAWTON

Carter, Capt. J. W., 294

MUSKOGEE

Linden, Brig. Gen. Henning, 308

NORMAN

Bishop, Lt. Frank, 234

Downing, Capt. R. L., 13

Lockett, Maj. W. L., 34

OKLAHOMA CITY

Byrd, Maj. Jerome, 148

Fry, Jr., Lt. Col. E. M., 227

Harden, Lt. J. B., 87

McLain, Lt. Gen. R. S., 189, 283

Robertson, Maj. Gen. W. M., 161,
200, 221

Smith, Lt. L. N., 230

Smoot, Capt. Ozell, 187

Turner, Lt. Col. R. E., 161

PICHER

Fagan, Pvt. L. D., 62

Miller, Sgt. C. A., 315

STILLWATER

Hazen, Lt. Col. Arlon, 244

TULSA

Adams, Lt. W. L., 116

Smith, Lt. C. L., 115

WAGONER

Omonhundro, Capt. Thos., 49

WAURIKA

Bland, Jr., Maj. E. A., 51

OREGON**ASTORIA**

French, Lt. Col. Donald, 152

COTTAGE GROVE

Maxwell, Corp. R. D., M. 156

DALLAS

Allgood, Lt. Col. J. D., 191, 224

ENTERPRISE

Stockdale, Capt. Gayle, 75

EUGENE

Stevens, Col. K. D., 293

GRANTS PASS

Jackson, Capt. G. H., 18

MEDFORD

Broedlow, Col. R. W., 72

PORTLAND

Kingsley, Lt. D. R., *M*, 99
Twining, Lt. Gen. N. F., 302

PENNSYLVANIA

ALLENTOWN

Rogers, Lt. R. L., 227

ALLISON PARK

Clarke, Lt. Genevieve, 76

ASPINWALL

Morrison, Lt. B. L., 50

BAIRDFORD

Babinetz, Pvt. Marjory, 247

BERWYN

Chilson, Sgt. L. M., 274

BOYERTOWN

Spaatz, Gen. C. A., 89

BRENTWOOD

Mitchell, Lt. John, 242

CAIRNBROOK

Kostechak, Pvt. John, 36

CHESTER

Burk, Maj. Frank, 288

CONNELLSVILLE

Yewell, Col. Don, 195

CRESTON

Hoover, Lt. Col. J. R., 103

EASTON

McElmar, Lt. W. M., 116

FAYETTE CITY

Roskovich, Sgt. Michael, 293

FINLEYVILLE

Mathies, Sgt. Archibald, *M*, 300

GLADWYNE

Arnold, Sr., Gen. H. H., 90, 291

HARRISBURG

Downs, Lt. R. C., 182

HAZLETON

Adams, Col. C. M., 308

HUGHESVILLE

Andrews, Coxwain Richard, 112

INDIANA

Stewart, Col. J. M., 300

JEROME

Freeman, Pvt. Brougher, 143

LANSDOWNE

Rosenkrans, Sgt. Virginia, 97

LEBANON

Patch, Jr., Lt. Gen. A. M., 151, 261,
282

LINWOOD

Camillo, Sgt. M. A., 227

McKEESPORT

Richey, Helen, 96

MT. CARMEL

Gavin, Maj. Gen. J. M., 136, 179,
198, 213, 315

NARBERTH

Wood, Maj. Gen. J. S., 148, 205

NORTHUMBERLAND

Ent, Brig. Gen. U. G., 98

Van Kirk, Capt. T. J., 125

OIL CITY

Gabreski, Col. F. S., 290

PHILADELPHIA

Bolling, Jr., Maj. Gen. A. R., 192,
206, 278

Buckley, Lt. F. X., 67

Callahan, Capt. E. L., 285

Craighill, Maj. Margaret, 246

Downs, Lt. R. C., 182

Hinsley, Lt. I. I., 121

Kirk, Vice Adm. A. G., 31, 108

Murphy, Lt. John, 62

Witte, Lt. E. F., 112

PITTSBURGH

Balter, Sgt. A. J., 308

Brereton, Lt. Gen. L. H., 49, 176,
259

Cook, Lt. G. W., 26

Gregory, Flight Off. T. W., 106

Howieson, Pvt. Lora, 76

Kelly, Lt. C. E., *M*, 52

Lasky, Lt. John, 224

Lutz, Lt. Elizabeth, 247

Mackall, Lt. B. B., 216

Mitchell, Lt. John, 242

Williams, Lt. Henry, 170

PLYMOUTH

Chincher, Sgt. Michael, 241

READING

Baer, Lt. Paul, 186

RIDLEY PARK

Mitra, Warrant Off. George, 68

RUTLEDGEHobbs, Maj. Gen. L. S., 137, 172.
189, 258, 286**STRAFFORD**

Foskett, Capt. J. H., 315

TROY

Pierce, Col. J. R., 270

TYRONE

Towle, Pvt. J. R., M, 179

WILKES-BARRE

Amaitis, Lt. E. J., 182

WILLIAMSPORTMcKee, Col. R. L., 255
Wilhelm, Pvt. Fred, 108**WILMERDING**

Dangelo, Corp. F. J., 315

YORKDevers, Gen. J. L., 151, 249, 273,
312
Goode, Chaplain Alexander, 88**RHODE ISLAND****PROVIDENCE**Halton, Jr., Lt. Col. W. T., 211
Mason, Ens. D. F., 78
Mozzetta, Pvt. Domenic, 313**SHAWOMET**

Newsome, Lt. Florence, 246

SOUTH CAROLINA**BENNETTSVILLE**

Therrell, Lt. Col. Teal, 311

CHARLESTONBristol, Jr., Vice Adm. A. L., 78
Hayward, Lt. Com. A. B., 111
Jenkins, Maj. F. L., 230
Youngblood, Capt. G. L., 236**CHERAW**

Bellinger, Vice Adm. P. N. L., 78

COLUMBIA

Burke, Jr., Lt. J. E., 307

GREENVILLEParks, Maj. Gen. F. L., 259, 315
Sloan, Maj. Gen. J. E., 63**JOHNS ISLAND**

Bryan, Lt. Col. C. B., 225

KINGSTREE

Signius, Capt. Geo., 276

LEXINGTON

Wingard, Lt. Col. J. T., 289

ROCK HILL

Furr, Lt. Col. C. P., 66

SPARTANBURGCohen, Lt. Col. Harold, 256
Robertson, Ens. T. E., 80
(no town designated)
McSween, Maj. Harry, 71**SOUTH DAKOTA****ABERDEEN**

Schroeder, Maj. A. W., 100

HILL CITY

Egan, Maj. J. W., 245

MILBANK

Tillman, Capt. D. L., 141

PEEVEROwen, Pvt. Gordon, 182
(no town designated)
Hughes, Maj. Gen. E. S., 14**TENNESSEE****ATHENS**

Jones, Jr., Lt. C. W., 285

ATOKA

Keep, Pvt. Bert, 44

CHATTANOOGA

Freeman, Lt. R. L., 308

COVINGTON

Mullins, Lt. R. W., 297

KNOXVILLE

Bishop, Capt. R. H., 290

LEBANONGerhardt, Maj. Gen. C. H., 138,
234**MEMPHIS**Childers, Maj. Wm., 179
Forrest, Brig. Gen. N. B., 294**MURFREESBORO**

Travis, Lt. Com. C. W., 109

NASHVILLEBeck, Lt. W. S., 301
Gillem, Jr., Lt. Gen. A. C., 237,
258
Hinds, Col. S. R., 214, 267**SMOKY JUNCTION**

Low, Sgt. Walter, 176

SODDY

Lovelady, Lt. Col. W. B., 183

SOUTH PITTSBURGJackson, Lt. Col. Wm., 103
(no town designated)
Gooch, Jr. Lt. C. M., 265**TEXAS****ABILENE**Lockhart, Maj. Chas., 216
McFarlen, Pvt. John, 108
Wells, Lt. Col. Clayton, 305**ALBANY**

Williams, Maj. Gen. R. B., 282

AMARILLO

Boyd, Lt. John, 56

ARP

McKay, Capt. W. H., 65

ATHENS

Richardson, Lt. Col. J. J., 232

AUSTINGaffey, Maj. Gen. H. J., 205, 250,
316
Melasky, Maj. Gen. H. O., 289
Norris, Jr., Lt. Col. J. A., 235
Yates, Lt. R. J., 34**BEAUMONT**Richardson, Lt. Col. Walter, 266
Vickers, Maj. W. N., 87**BELTON**

Walker, Lt. Gen. W. H., 167, 249

BROWNWOODKnott, Lt. J. H., 212
Tarrant, Col. Y. S., 103**CAMERON**

Newton, Lt. Frank, 262

CHATFIELDTruscott, Jr., Lt. Gen. L. K., 123,
151**CHICO**

Wood, Col. W. R., 126

COLUMBUS

Morgan, Maj. C. W., 243

CORPUS CHRISTI

Johns, Lt. Col. G. S., 138

CRESSON

Lowry, Rear Adm. F. J., 151

DALLASCollier, Brig. Gen. J. H., 206, 214,
286

Discus, Lt. Geo., 164

Dougherty, Lt. W. B., 44

Farqher, Sgt. Edward, 195

Hardin, Brig. Gen. T. D., 17

Lloyd, Capt. B. M., 19, 39

McKay, Capt. W. H., 65

Pierce, Brig. Gen. J. L., 312

Roberts, Lt. Mary, 76

DARROUZETT

Gilger, Col. C. P., 295

DENISONEisenhower, Gen. Dwight D., 8,
117, 142, 217**EAGLE PASS**

Moran, Lt. Col. R. B., 251

EDEN

Eaker, Lt. Gen. I. C., 60

EL PASOAllen, Maj. Gen. Terry, 132, 180,
Barnes, Lt. D. G., 295
238

- Hillsinger, Col. L. B., 124, 125
Latta, Lt. Col. W. B., 133
Mumford, Lt. Col. H. G., 295
- FARMERSVILLE**
Murphy, Lt. Audie L., M, 223
- FORT WORTH**
Banks, Maj. A. M., 50
Dubose, Lt. E. A., 41
Hall, Col. J. G., 129
Hardin, Brig. Gen. T. O., 17
Hogan, Lt. Col. S. M., 208, 230
Shoffit, Lt. J. C., 285
Whitaker, Lt. J. W., 47
Yeates, Maj. L. G., 120
- GAINESVILLE**
Peck, Col. Geo., 116
- GONZALES**
Smith, Lt. Col. C. D., 46
- GREENVILLE**
Murphy, Lt. Audie. M, 223
- HARLINGEN**
Bacon, Col. R. L., 193
- HEMPSTEAD**
Weyland, Lt. Gen. O. P., 256
- HOUSTON**
Dallas, Jr., Capt. F. W., 19
Doan, Lt. Col. L. L., 239
Duncan, Col. G. E., 292
Fierstein, Lt. S. F., 153
Hobby, Col. Oveta C., 246
Ives, Lt. Col. R. M., 46
Kotzebue, Lt. A. L., 221. 309
Smith, Lt. Col. J., 163
- HUNTSVILLE**
Ethridge, Capt. M. B., 155
- JACKSBORO**
Putnam, Lt. Col. C. E., 296
- JACKSONVILLE**
Beall, Lt. Col. J. A., 278
- KERRVILLE**
Dent, Jr., Col. F. R., 299
- KYLE**
Richmond, Maj. J. L., 193
- LEVELLAND**
Jenkins, Lt. Col. J. S., 295
- LUBBOCK**
Pierce, Col. A. J., 95
- LULING**
Logan, Sgt. J. M., 47
- MARSHALL**
Allen, Maj. Gen. Roderick, 223, 261, 281, 304
- MART**
McCoy, Maj. J. H., 223
- MEXIA**
Phixton, Lt. Marsh, 295
- NORMANGEE**
Chappell, Seaman O. G., 88
- OLNEY**
Timmons, Maj. G. D., 64
- PHARR**
Hogan, Lt. Col. S. M., 208, 230
- ROCK SPRING**
Whittle, Lt. Reba, 188
- SAN ANGELO**
Mathis, Lt. Jack, 294
- SAN ANTONIO**
Beacham, Capt. Chas., 56
Collier, Brig. Gen. J. H., 206, 214, 286
Eagles, Maj. Gen. W. W., 154
Fickel, Maj. Gen. J. E., 301
Foster, Jr., Capt. W. E., 34
Leonard, Maj. Gen. J. W., 203, 240, 265
Lozano, Capt. Harold, 227
McCall, Lt. Col. E. B., 46
Noble, Col. Chas. 313
Sloan, Maj. Gen. J. E., 63
Smith, Maj. Ralph, 58
Speedie, Lt. Col. J. C., 145
Terrell, Col. F. R., 18
Timberlake, Jr., Maj. Gen. E. J., 299
Whittle, Lt. Reba, 188
Woods, Sgt. J. C., 316
- STOCKDALE**
Cheek, Maj. A. R., 66
- TEMPLE**
Huckabee, Sgt. A. B., 36

WACO

Bool, Capt. Frank, 183
Dawson, Capt. J. T., 120, 186
Fickessen, Maj. J. W., 208
Hardin, Brig. Gen. T. O., 17

WEATHERFORD

Simpson, Lt. Gen. W. H., 191,
208, 226, 257, 285

WICHITA FALLS

Chaney, Maj. Gen. J. E., 90

WINTERS

Jones, Maj. D. M., 18
(no town designated)
Roosevelt, Brig. Gen. Elliott, 23

UTAH

FORT DOUGLAS

Allen, Maj. Gen. Terry, 132, 180,
238

SALT LAKE CITY

Bahr, Corp. P. D., 147
Dean, Maj. Gen. W. F., *M*, 305
Peterson, Col. C. G., 92
Saunders, Brig. Gen. R. C., 49

SANTAQUIN

Peterson, Col. C. G., 92

UTE INDIAN RESERVATION

Natchees, Pvt. Harvey, 315

VERNAL

Johnson, Lt. N. J., 115

VERMONT

BURLINGTON

Austin, Col. E. L., 13

MONTPELIER

Cook, Lt. Col. Julian, 220

VIENNA

Harmon, Maj. Gen. E. N., 172,
205, 316

WINDSOR

Richmond, Capt. K. R., 184

VIRGINIA

ALEXANDRIA

Learned, Lt. Col. H. G., 219
Spaatz, Gen. C. A., 89

ARLINGTON

Carter, Capt. T. J., 27
Costello, Col. N. A., 254
Donovan, Maj. Gen. Leo, 211
Lanham, Brig. Gen. C. T., 185,
225
Learned, Lt. Col. H. G., 219
Taylor, Lt. Gen. M. D., 107, 177,
203
Vickers, Maj. W. N., 87

BRISTOL

Marshall, Lt. A. D., 102

CHARLOTTESVILLE

Carter, Sgt. Nancy, 141
Heilman, Maj. Gus, 274
Hughes, Capt. F. M., 80
Norstad, Maj. Gen. Lauris, 15
Truscott, Jr., Lt. Gen. L. K., 123,
151

DANVILLE

Bailey, Lt. Col. Wm., 143
Riley, Lt. Col. J. R., 232, 276

EARLEHURST

Bellinger, Vice Adm. Patrick, 78

FORT HUNT

Timberlake, Jr., Maj. Gen. E. J.,
299

FORT MONROE

Irwin, Maj. Gen. S. L., 167, 192,
201, 231, 255
Ridgway, Gen. M. B., 31, 179

GOSHEN

Condon, Capt. David, 115

LYNCHBURG

Hinds, Col. S. R., 214, 267

NELSON COUNTY

Robertson, Maj. Gen. W. M., 161,
200, 221

PETERSBURG

Gerow, Lt. Gen. L. T., 119, 277

PULASKI

Jordan, Lt. Frank, 175

RICHMOND

Burriss, Maj. Gen. W. A., 249,
276, 304

Earnest, Maj. Gen. H. L., 225, 255,
288

Gayle, Jr., Col. Seth, 316

Jett, Lt. Col. Edgar, 181

Reed, Col. C. H., 288

ROWLESBURG

Welton, Lt. Col. J. W., 16

STAUNTON

Matthews, Lt. Col. J. H., 14

VIENNA

Gallery, Capt. T. V., 79

WARRENTON

Cocke, Maj. Philip, 170

Smith, Maj. Gen. A. C., 281, 290

Wallach, Lt. Col. Marshall, 149

WHITE STONE

Earnest, Maj. Gen. H. L., 225,
255, 288

WOODSTOCK

Haislip, Lt. Gen. W. N., 168, 261

WYTHEVILLE

Parker, Jr., Maj. Gen. E. P., 220,
277

WASHINGTON**BENTON CITY**

Wilson, Lt. J. B., 24

CHELAN

Hoffman, Lt. Com. G. D., 111

GOLDENDALE

Jones, Maj. Gen. A. W., 197

KALAMA

Wright, Sgt. Ella, 22

PORT ORCHARD

Petherick, Capt. R. L., 56

PUYALLUP

Kandle, Lt. V. L., 158

ROY

Kandle, Lt. V. L., 158

SEATTLE

Culin, Jr., Maj. Gen. F. L., 187,
251, 289

Momyer, Col. W. W., 30

Rowe, Capt. Gordon, 78

SPOKANE

Cerny, Lt. Col. John, 32

Gumm, Jr., Lt. C. P., 298

Hatcher, Jr., Lt. Col. W. A., 290

Hoisington, Lt. Elizabeth, 142

Huston, Sgt. J. O., 305

SUMNER

Clifton, Lt. Col. C. V., 74

TACOMA

Brown, Lt. Col. C. E., 272

Kane, Capt. Isabel, 142

Richards, Lt. J. R., 115

WAPATO

Pister, Capt. Carl, 238

WENATCHEE

Haugh, Capt. Donald, 245

YAKIMA

Baldwin, Capt. I. E., 296

WEST VIRGINIA**CHARLESTON**

West, Maj. J. P., 189

FAIRMONT

Roberts, Capt. G. S., 61

HUNTINGTON

Riggs, Jr., Lt. Col. T. J., 198

MORGANTOWN

Thorne, Capt. G. W., 185

PARKERSBURG

Roberts, Col. W. L., 232

ST. GEORGE

Shahan, Lt. E. E., 86

WHEELING

Marlin, Corp. Mary, 76

WISCONSIN**BLOOMER**

Prueher, Lt. Com. B. J., 114

EAU CLAIRE

Hammond, Lt. Earl, 38

FOND DU LAC

Dale, Lt. Lee, 138

MILWAUKEE

Forbes, Sgt. Sanford, 10

Kuter, Maj. Gen., 17

MONROE

Twining, Lt. Gen. N. P., 302

MOSINEE

Slewitzke, Sgt. Marian, 76

OSHKOSH

Deaster. Sgt. Richard, 204

RACINE

Jerstad, Maj. John, 99

Wells, Sgt. J. A., 141

SUPERIOR

Donahoe, Lt. O. J., 81

TAYLOR

Anderson, Lt. R. A., 301

WHITELAW

Steeber, Pvt. Wm., 184

WYOMING

LARAMIE

Smith, Lt. Langdon, 256

Stevenson, Col. J. D., 30



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